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Marxism Today

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The Gospel According to Gaitskell

George Matthews

THE crucial paragraph in the "Declaration of Principles" which Mr. Gaitskell put to the Labour Party National Executive Committee on March 16th is that dealing with nationalisation.*

Since the Blackpool Labour Party Conference the Labour movement has been waiting to see what specifically he would say on nationalisation. Now we know. His "Declaration" does indeed speak of common ownership, but only in order to hedge it about with qualifications, escape clauses, conditions, evasions and ambiguities on a scale not seen since the days of Ramsay MacDonald.

There are two principal ways in which his statement about a substantial "measure of common ownership" is rendered meaningless.

First, he says that its extent and form should be "decided from time to time according to circumstances, due regard being paid to the views of the workers directly concerned". This in fact gives a free hand to the right wing to do nothing at all about common ownership, since they can always decide that "circumstances" are not favourable. Unfortunately, the phrase about taking into account "the views of the workers directly concerned" can hardly be taken seriously. For if there was any intention to take any notice of such workers, the Labour Party programme today would contain proposals for nationalising every major industry in the country. From building to engineering most of the trade unions of Britain are in favour of the nationalisation either of the whole, or a major part, of the industries with which they are concerned.

The second group of qualifications in Gaitskell's statement is in the phrase in which he throws everything but the kitchen sink into his definition of common ownership. Nationalisation is a word he never uses at all. Instead he describes it as "state monopoly", presumably with the intention of discrediting it to some extent with the derogatory connotations of the word "monopoly". Then municipal enterprises, consumer co-operation and "individual public enterprises" are chucked in, and for good measure "public participation in private concerns"—that is the "shareholder state" of *Industry and Society*.

The advantage of this bran-tub definition of common ownership from Gaitskell's point of view is that he can pick out anything he likes "from time to time according to circumstances" and claim that he is operating the "declaration of principles". Thus he can make taking shares in private industry (legalising the burglars' union in return for a share in the swag, as Barbara Castle said at Blackpool) his principal aim in the next election, and make no proposals of any kind for extending nationalisation. This formula even leaves the way open for a retreat in the future from the proposal to renationalise steel and road transport—even though Gaitskell did say at Nottingham on February 13th that he was still in favour of this at the present moment.

His attitude on nationalisation is characteristic. In his Nottingham speech he lifted his hands in pious horror at the suggestion that he was "against nationalisation". To prove that this was a slander he repeated his Blackpool statement that he was "not satisfied with the present frontiers between public and private enterprise".

We have all heard of the man who, when asked his views on sin, replied: "I'm against it." Mr.

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* *Since this article was written the Labour Party Executive meeting has taken place. Clause 4 was not altered, but Gaitskell's "declaration" to "clarify" the constitution was adopted.*

However, the key paragraph on common ownership was changed. It now speaks of an "extension of common ownership substantial enough to give the community power over the commanding heights of the economy. . . ."

Thus Gaitskell had to retreat from his aim of getting rid of Clause 4 altogether, and was also compelled to compromise on his "declaration". But he has succeeded in qualifying Clause 4 by his references to private ownership and to the "shareholder state".

In other words, for the Socialist aim embodied in Clause 4 his "declaration" substitutes the aim of the "mixed economy"—that is, capitalism.

After the Executive Committee, therefore, there is a still greater need to press forward the fight for public ownership of the key industries as the economic basis for a Socialist policy. Already the Transport and General Workers Union is said to be preparing to campaign along these lines. A powerful united fight can defeat Gaitskell's aims completely at the Labour Party conference.

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Gaitskell is not so forthright. He is neither for nor against sin: he is merely not satisfied with the present frontiers between good and evil. At any rate the New Testament was clear about what constituted sin and what didn't. But Gaitskell's "New Testament" will baffle anyone who wants to find out what is the difference between socialism and capitalism. It is also worth reminding Gaitskell that the New Testament made clear that the Christian disciples held all things in common. No such revolutionary and subversive doctrine can be found in the Gospel according to Gaitskell.

High-Sounding Phrases

Whether Gaitskell's "Declaration" is substituted for Clause 4 of the Labour Party Constitution, or whether Clause 4 is retained as a sacred relic, before which ceremonial obeisance is made on anniversaries while the "Declaration" is the real basis of right-wing policy and practice, the final result would be the continued right-wing effort to drive the Labour Party still further to the right.

Of course it would be a certain reverse for Gaitskell if in the end he is compelled to leave Clause 4 intact. This would reflect the great strength of the movement which has developed in defence of Clause 4, and would be an encouragement to continue the struggle for a socialist policy. It would open favourable possibilities for carrying the battle beyond the stage of defence, and to the stage of the counter-offensive against the right wing.

To stop the Labour Party going further to the right is very important. But it is only the first step in the effort to move it further to the left. The necessity for this effort is shown not only by the passage in Gaitskell's "Declaration" dealing with common ownership, but by its whole character. For it is a classic example of the right-wing tactic of covering up a reactionary policy with a mass of high-sounding, "liberal", "moral" and "ethical" phrases.

Gaitskell starts off by declaring the Labour Party is in favour of "the brotherhood of man". Who isn't? It is an admirable aim, but how can it be achieved?

How can it be achieved while imperialism continues to exist? It is splendid to reject race discrimination, and to declare for the right of all countries to freedom and independence. But pretty well everybody is prepared nowadays to state this as an aim. The question is when is "the right" going to be exercised?

An *aim* of this kind can exist side-by-side with the continued existence of imperialism and continued colonial oppression for years ahead. So why not come out with the clear declaration that the next Labour Government will immediately on taking office allow every colonial people to exercise its right to independence without conditions and without delay?

It is the same with the foreign policy aims set out in the Declaration. They are admirable, but entirely general. So Gaitskell can cross his heart and adhere to them, while simultaneously supporting West German rearmament, N.A.T.O. and the hydrogen bomb.

Social justice and the rejection of the "acquisitive canons of capitalist doctrine" are excellent objectives. But what about the capitalist *system* which gives rise to the capitalist *doctrine,* and which denies social justice? Are we to aim to get rid of the doctrine, while leaving the system intact?

Gaitskell says he is for a "classless society". How can this be achieved unless the capitalist economic basis of society, which produces antagonistic classes, is ended?

Classes will not be ended by Gaitskell's "shareholder state" proposals. They will only be ended by ending the exploitation of man by man—by waging the class struggle *now* to develop the strength, organisation and political consciousness of the working people to the stage when they will be capable of taking power from the hands of the capitalist class. But the class struggle, exploitation, and political power, are words that do not occur in Gaitskell's "Declaration". He will produce high-sounding phrases by the score, but avoid like the plague any reference to the capitalist system of organised robbery and violence which prevents the realisation of the ideals.

An Old Issue

It is clear from what has happened since Blackpool that despite the opposition to his ideas from the left, and the almost complete lack of enthusiasm from the centre and even some of the right-wing elements in the Labour Party, Gaitskell has never budged from his desire to get Clause 4 out of the Constitution. He may be compelled to avoid a head-on onslaught, but his aim will be to kill it by neglect if he is not allowed to get rid of it immediately by one decisive blow.

Why? Why is the right wing so determined to get its way on this question? Would it not be better, even from Gaitskell's point of view, to "let sleeping dogs lie"? Why raise such a shindy about a mere "form of words" which in any case has in practice been virtually ignored by the Labour leadership for years?

We cannot find the answers to these questions

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unless we look back, as well as forward. For this controversy about the aim of the Labour Party is not new. It preceded the formation of the Party, it accompanied its birth pangs, it characterised its formative years, and it has raged with varying degrees of intensity ever since. This was inevitable given the peculiar character of the Labour Party when it came into being as an alliance between the trade unions and the socialist groupings then existing in Britain. It was not a socialist party. Yet it arose out of the need for working class political organisation and action, its formation came as a result of years of socialist propaganda aimed at convincing the trade unions of the need for independent political representation, and it included many who wanted it to have a socialist aim.

Thus from its foundation there was a struggle within it between those who wanted it to reject the theory of the class struggle and to become in essence another Liberal Party under a Labour label, and those who wanted it to become a really socialist party, aiming to put an end to the capitalist system.

Lenin's Analysis

With his usual ability to get to the essence of a question, Lenin, soon after the formation of the Labour Party, summed up its position and the attitude which he thought Marxists at that time should adopt towards it, in the 1908 debates on whether the Second International should accept the affiliation of the Labour Party. Arguing in favour, he said that the Labour Party "represents the first step on the part of the really proletarian organisations of Britain towards a conscious class policy and towards a *socialist* workers' party". To admit the Labour Party on this basis, he argued, "would make hundreds of thousands of British workers, who undoubtedly respect the decisions of the International, but have not yet become full Socialists, ponder once again over the question of why they are regarded as having taken only the *first* step, and of what should be the *next* step along this road".

But at the same time he opposed the resolution put by Kautsky because, he said, it "looked as if the International certifies that the Labour Party is *actually* waging a consistent class struggle, as if it is sufficient for a workers' organisation to form a separate Labour group in Parliament in order *in its entire conduct* to become independent of the bourgeoisie".

In the years that followed these remarks of Lenin, the struggle between those who wanted the Labour Party to "become independent of the bourgeoisie in its entire conduct" and those who wanted to prevent it from "waging a consistent class struggle" continued.

Jack Cohen's article in *Marxism Today* (December 1959) described the repeated efforts made by the left in the years up to 1918 to incorporate socialist aims in the programme and Constitution of the Labour Party. These efforts failed, and the right-wing leadership moved more and more into a position of class collaboration, ending up with complete support for the imperialist war.

Yet the British Labour movement could not remain unaffected by the developments at home and abroad resulting from the growth of the revolutionary movement. Under the impact of the war and the Russian Revolution the mood of the working class was radical and the old formulae could no longer hold the movement in check.

Thus the 1918 Constitution for the first time included socialist aims, embodied in Clause 4. Although the right wing, in agreeing to these changes, had not the slightest intention of working in the spirit of the Constitution, the 1918 Constition marked a very significant step in the development of the Labour Party.

A Socialist Aim

Whatever the leadership might *do* in practice to prop up capitalism, the Party was now for the first time officially committed to a socialist aim. And, indeed, despite all the class collaborationist and reformist activities of the leadership, they did not propose to remove this aim until Labour's defeat in the General Election of 1959. In words, at any rate, the Labour Party had the aim of replacing capitalism by socialism, and this was the position taken up even by right-wing leaders.

When Attlee in 1937 wrote *The Labour Party in Perspective* he had a whole chapter on the "Socialist Objective". He began it by quoting Clause 4 and wrote: "All the major industries will be owned and controlled by the community" and "land will be owned by the community, not by private individuals". So in words Attlee declared a socialist aim. In deeds he pursued a reformist policy.

Now Gaitskell wants to get rid even of the words. His aim, systematically and ruthlessly pursued since 1955, is to make clear beyond a doubt that the Labour Party accepts the capitalist system and does not intend to challenge it. His proposals on Clause 4 are in fact the logical conclusion of a policy pursued over years. The policy document *Industry and Society* in practice excluded further nationalisation from Labour's programme, replacing it with the idea of buying shares in capitalist industry.

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This particular item of Mr. Gaitskell's clothing has since been stolen by the Tories, with their proposals for subsidising the privately-owned aircraft industry and sharing in some of the proceeds.

Plan for Progress expounded the same ideas on capitalism that Gaitskell put forward in his Blackpool speech. According to these theories capitalism had fundamentally changed and would no longer give rise to economic crises. There was therefore neither the need nor the incentive to overthrow it. Labour's job was to manage the system better than the Tories.

An International Process

This process of rendering the Labour Party utterly impotent as an anti-capitalist force was part of an international process. Throughout Europe, following on the re-establishment of the Socialist International at Frankfurt in 1952, the right-wing Social Democrats have been conducting a similar battle.

"A spectre is haunting Europe—the spectre of Revisionism", wrote Crosland in the March issue of *Encounter*, adding "Mr. Gaitskell is not alone".

The Dutch Labour Party adopted a new policy programme last November advocating public control over privately-owned undertakings only "if this should prove to be necessary", and saying that socialisation of the most important means of production will be necessary only "if this course proves to be the most effective way".

The Swedish Social Democratic Party's draft for its new statement of principles speaks of "public ownership or public control" to the "extent that this is necessary", but also speaks of "stimulating private enterprise" in other fields. Similar formulae are used by the Swiss Social Democratic Party and the Austrian Socialist Party.

The German Social Democratic Party has gone furthest of all, declaring in its new Basic Programme adopted last November that "Private ownership of the means of production is no longer identical with the control of power", and speaking of public ownership as appropriate only "where sound economic power relations cannot be guaranteed by other means".

All this is hailed by Crosland as some sort of proof that Gaitskell is right. It does not seem to occur to him that international social-democracy is wrong. When he appeals with such arguments to the "internationalists of the British left" does he not see that there are other and better examples to follow?

Why should British Labour model itself on parties which have failed to achieve office, or which, when in office, have failed completely to change society? Why should it not, on the contrary, look abroad to the countries where socialism has been established; where as a result of the defeat of revisionism in the working-class movement donkey's years ago, the working class and its allies are in power; and where gigantic advances are being made in every field of human endeavour?

Crosland may be wilfully blind. He and Gaitskell may tell us to abandon socialism at precisely the moment when its triumphs are increasingly obvious to the eyes of hundreds of millions of people. But there is no reason why we should take such nonsensical advice.

A hundred years ago and more it was communism which was the spectre haunting Europe. Now it is no spectre, but a tremendous and living reality in a third of the world. It is reformism and revisionism which have miserably failed. Their spectres linger on, it is true, and it is time they were exorcised.

But it is anti-communism which is the principal characteristic of the Gaitskells and Croslands. Collaboration with capitalism at home and acceptance of the imperialist robbery of the colonies abroad, leads them to a bipartisan foreign policy based on collaboration with imperialist America rather than socialist Russia. Their policy is the political expression of the post-war capitalist boom, accepting its permanence and attempting to utilise it to dampen down the class struggle of the workers and destroy their socialist consciousness. Thus the reasons given by Gaitskell for his proposal to amend the constitution are really pretexts to disguise the real aim.

Gaitskell's Case

This is clear when we look at the case he has put. He has argued that the reason Labour lost the election was that its policy was too left, that "nationalisation was a vote loser" and that Clause 4 "lays us open to continual misrepresentation" (Blackpool). "What does us harm at elections," he has said, "is the vague threat to all private property, which we should eliminate."

This is such transparent nonsense that even Gaitskell himself cannot possibly believe it.

First, the 1959 election, like the 1955 election, was fought on his policy, not that of the left. It was a policy which did not merely toss nationalisation overboard, but included the most meagre programme of social reform ever put forward by the Labour Party in an election. It was the right-wing policy which was put to the test of practice, and miserably failed.

Second, there is not the slightest evidence that Clause 4 played any part in the election campaign.

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Most voters in Britain had never heard of it until Gaitskell himself gave it prominence by his Blackpool speech.

Third, to the extent that nationalisation was unpopular, the real question is: whose fault was that? The Labour Government type of nationalisation, aimed at providing cheap fuel and services to privately-owned industry, paying huge sums in compensation to former owners, and devoid of any democratic content, certainly deserved many of the criticisms levelled against it by working people. But this was not because it was "too socialist", but too capitalist.

Moreover, Gaitskell and Co. have been among the most virulent opponents of further nationalisation. They vied with the Tories in praising the "efficient" private monopolies. Having spent years attacking nationalisation, Gaitskell then has the nerve to make its alleged "unpopularity" the reason for abandoning it. We can be forgiven for thinking that perhaps if it had been popular, despite his efforts, he would have found some other reason for opposing extended nationalisation—perhaps that Labour "should not seek for easy popularity".

Fourth, the claim that people thought Labour aimed to nationalise everything is childish. Even the crudest Tory propaganda in the election did not make this claim. It would have been laughed out of court by the electorate.

Indeed, the electorate's difficulty was in finding the real difference between the policies of the two major parties. There has never been any question of nationalising every garage and barber shop. The real threat to small businesses, in fact, comes from the huge monopolies. For if we are talking about garages, there are fewer independent garages about today. More and more the big oil companies are swallowing up the small firms. Even when they do not own them outright, the oil firms and motor combines dictate what many garages may and may not sell.

No, the problem is not uncertainty about the small man. What Gaitskell does not tell us is what he is going to do about the 500 giant concerns which dominate the economic life of Britain. All the words in the world about deciding on the extent of common ownership "from time to time and according to the circumstances" will simply make the directors of Imperial Chemical Industries and Unilevers laugh. But there would soon be no smile on their faces if Labour announced its intention of taking them over in the interests of the community.

This is the importance of the argument about Clause 4. It is not just an argument about a paragraph in a constitution. At bottom it is an argument about who shall own and govern Britain —the people, or a tiny handful of big business interests.

It is also an argument about peace and about wages. For the class collaborationist attitude which wants to get rid of Clause 4 also leads to anti-communist cold war policies abroad and the damping down of the class fight of the workers at home.

Labour's Past Policy Bankrupt

One of the most outrageous things about the claim of the right wing to have the right to dictate Labour Party policy is not only that their future policy would be wrong, but their past policy has proved bankrupt.

Look at the succession of mistakes they have made. They supported German rearmament—and still defend it despite the daily proofs of its appalling consequences. George Brown admitted in the foreign policy debate in Parliament in February that they had been fooled by the Tories over the Paris agreements. Yet he and Gaitskell still claim that Labour support of German rearmament was right.

So bitterly anti-Soviet are the right wing that they are on many issues even more inflexible than the Tories. Thus Gaitskell refused to go to Moscow when he had the chance to go there before Macmillan. He surrendered the initiative on peace to the Tories, and this undoubtedly contributed largely to Labour's election defeat.

Or take the wages struggle. When the General Election result was known Macmillan hailed it as proof that the class struggle was "obsolete". The "Hampstead Set" around Gaitskell joined in, with Crosland declaring that Labour should stop talking about "working class solidarity". But within months the class struggle had grown sharper and the need for working-class solidarity was clearer than ever. The estimate of Gaitskell and Co. was wildly wrong. By threatening a rail strike the railwaymen won an important victory in February. What were the Labour leaders doing? They were telling the men to call off the strike and warning them that they would get nowhere by striking. If the men had taken the advice of these leaders they would have got nothing.

Gaitskell and his colleagues have lost three general elections in a row. They have made it possible for Macmillan to pose as a man of peace. They have not lifted a finger to help workers engaged in industrial struggles, but have joined in the Tory and millionaire press attack on the so-called "unofficial" strikes. Yet they now have the impudence to pose as the supermen who know all the answers to the problems of the Labour movement.

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The Left in the Labour Party

It is unfortunate that the left in the Labour Party, confronted with such a situation, is still to a large extent confused and leaderless. It was clear at Blackpool that the years of right-wing propaganda had had an effect even on many left members of the Labour Party. This was shown in their reluctance to speak in class terms. They preferred always to talk of the "moral issues". This is all very well, but what is the standard of morality? The right wing can talk as well as anyone about moral issues, and indeed Gaitskell is a past-master at cooking up phrases about ethical principles.

But most of the things the left was talking about were *class* issues. It was a question of a working-class ideology and policy as opposed to a capitalist ideology and policy.

Failure to be clear on this weakens very much the fight of the left, and contributes to the wavering and instability which is sometimes apparent. Did it really help the fight against the right wing, for example, to profess to believe, as *Tribune* did, that Mr. Gaitskell's Nottingham speech meant that he had "changed his tune" and become converted to nationalisation? Didn't this rather have the effect of disarming the movement, and putting it off its guard at a critical moment?

In this connection it must also be noted that many on the left are far from clear on the issue of nationalisation. In their anxiety to avoid "going too far" they have often in the end lined up with the right wing in some of their arguments. Thus in his *Encounter* article Crosland was able to make great play with some of the phrases in the *New Statesman* "Keeping Left" pamphlet, in which the argument was put that previously people "identified socialism with public ownership" whereas "we are now less concerned about who owns a factory".

In the discussions on the "shareholder state" idea the left members on the Labour Party executive not only voted for *Industry and Society* but are said to have played a considerable part in drafting it.

When it came to the pre-General Election period, and the General Election programme itself, they muted their criticism in the name of "unity". Even after the election some of them claimed that the programme on which it was fought was a good one.

These points are not made in any carping spirit. There have been many positive developments in the fight of the left, including the petition among M.P.s on keeping the aims of Clause 4. But unless lessons are drawn from past mistakes it will be more difficult in the future to estimate correctly and defeat these tactics of the right wing.

The most serious weakness of all stems from anti-communism. Whenever the left retreats before the McCarthyite anti-communist campaign of the right wing, it connives at its own destruction. There are some signs that this lesson is being learned. At any rate there is less active hostile propaganda against communism in some quarters than there used to be. This is a step forward, but it needs to be carried further to the positive fight to end the bans and proscriptions which divide the Labour movement and assist the right wing to maintain its dominant position.

If unity is strengthened there is no doubt that the Gaitskell policy of taking the Labour Party further to the right can be defeated. Already the Parliamentary Labour Party has reflected the strong feeling in the movement against Gaitskell's Clause 4 proposals, and compelled him to manoeuvre.

In the constituency parties a majority wants to stand by the aims of Clause 4.

The Trade Unions Decisive

But it is the trade unions which are decisive, and it is the prospect of defeat after defeat for his line in the 1960 trade union conferences which has undoubtedly been the main factor in deciding Gaitskell's tactics. When the Yorkshire miners voted for the defence of Clause 4 it was clear that there was every prospect of the National Union of Mineworkers as a whole taking the same stand. The Transport and General Workers' Union is also expected to oppose the abandonment of the aims set out in the constitution. Thus if other important unions can be won to take the same stand, Gaitskell's Blackpool line would be defeated at the next Labour Party conference.

Nothing would do more to help Labour win the next election. At Blackpool Dennis Healey attacked the left on the ground that it was all very fine to stick to socialist principles, but what was the use if Labour never achieved office and put the principles into effect?

This is the exact opposite of the real situation. It is Gaitskell's and Healey's policy which would make Labour a permanent (and very ineffective) Opposition. It is only a left policy which can inspire enthusiasm and win the mass support needed to defeat the Tories.

Defeating Gaitskell's Blackpool policy is therefore the first step in the fight for a socialist policy. The campaign on Clause 4 is not an end in itself. It is a stage in the main battle to end the domination of the right wing in the Labour movement and ensure that Labour has a clear fighting policy.

Retaining the aim of common ownership is vital. But it is also equally vital to see that it

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does not remain simply as a clause in a constitution, without any effect on the day-to-day activities of the Labour movement.

The present discussion shows the nature of the problem facing the Labour movement. It reveals the deepening of the division between those who want the Labour movement to fight for socialism, and those who want it to prop up capitalism.

Few on the left will dispute the need to combat still more vigorously the reactionary policy and actions of the right wing. But this also raises problems for all who claim to be Socialists. The battle is not simply to preserve the Constitution but the aim of socialism. This raises the question of what strategy can achieve this aim.

The Communist Party has tackled this problem in its programme *The British Road to Socialism*. The crucial question is political power. Unless the working class takes power from the capitalist class there can be no transition to socialism.

But political power cannot be won without a united fight. Working-class unity is needed not only on the immediate issues but for the conscious aim of winning power. It is needed not only to defeat the Tories, but to establish a socialist (not merely a Labour) majority in Parliament, consisting of Labour and Communist M.P.s who want to bring about the social revolution and are backed by the majority of the people.

Once this is understood and fought for in unity by all Socialists, the way will be open to the ending of the present right-wing domination of the Labour movement, and the strength of the movement will be used not to maintain capitalism in existence, but to replace it by socialism.

"The Affluent Society" or the Ideological Impact of Co-existence

R. Bellamy

I

PROFESSOR GALBRAITH of Harvard University has written an economic best-seller. *The Affluent Society* is already hailed by Strachey as a worthy successor in the 1960's to Keynes' *General Theory* of the 1930's. The *Economist* may be worried and sour, but Crosland is "wholeheartedly a Galbraith man", and in the *New Statesman* Balogh adds his approval.

Its debunking of "the conventional wisdom", its combination of wit, irony and iconoclasm will guarantee it a place in the hearts of angry young (and not-so-young) men everywhere. In Britain one of its themes will at once chime in with and crystallise the amorphous but pervasive concept of the New Class which has been so prominent in some explanations of Labour's 1959 election defeat. For this theme alone it merits examination. But it merits it for the other, and more compelling reason, which is given in the title of this article. Strachey, for once, is right: it is an important book. Galbraith's ideas, for all their idiosyncrasies, are not an isolated phenomenon in contemporary economic writing—which is not surprising. For, with the cold war not yet ended, peaceful competition already confronts imperialism with new economic and political difficulties, the facing of which compels developments of ideology.

The book's argument, briefly, is this: In the middle and late 1950's the United States faces an economic dilemma. Production and consumption per head of population are already at levels such that one is entitled to speak of "affluence"; yet there are powerful social forces making for continued expansion. The drive for expansion, here entitled "The Paramountcy of Production", has become one of the imperatives of the American system. Its causes, claims Galbraith, are, first, that fear of and memories of economic insecurity in the 1930's create popular pressure for full employment; second, that social tensions stemming from inequality are minimised if absolute standards of living among the lower income groups rise continuously; third, that the growth of large-scale production, with its twin offspring —the rise in output per head and the fall in

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number of sellers in any market ("oligopoly")—creates conditions in which selling pressures by producers mount as fast as their output—they not only put the consumer on an upward-moving escalator of wants, but they also provide him with the consumers' credit to satisfy them. This generation of wants by producers is called "The Dependence Effect". Fourth, that there is a great ideological hangover—"The Conventional Wisdom"—both at the popular and at the academic theoretical level, dating from the age of absolute poverty.

Such a society, with the triple imperatives of full employment, economic growth, and high levels of private consumption, has two major defects—persistent inflation and "Social Imbalance". This latter concept encompasses a state of "public stinginess in the midst of private affluence", a state where public services, from street cleaning to university education, are neglected; where, above all, there is an inadequate margin of provision for technical progress, education and foreign aid.

Inflation can, Galbraith believes, be held in check by a combination of price controls and a state of less-than-full employment. But the correction of social imbalance requires both a profound change in the goals which the economy sets itself, and, at the level of economic policy, a general sales tax which will restrain consumption and allow resources to be channelled into research, foreign aid, and education.

A short article cannot examine every facet of Galbraith's argument. I shall therefore comment briefly upon the concept of the New Class, and then concentrate attention upon what is new and crucial: the question of social imbalance, and the group of concepts clustered around the question of high consumption.

II

Work, Leisure, and the Concept of the New Class

It has become a commonplace of academic sociology to note the diminution in the proportion of the working population directly engaged in manipulative, manual operations, and the consequent growth in the number of those, the New Class, whose characteristics are that they do not "work" in the old sense, that they expect to get much of their life's satisfaction out of their employment itself (and consequently do not put pay among their highest priorities), and that they are recruited primarily on the basis of education.

First, it is of course to be expected that changes in the nature of the material productive forces at society's disposal will change the character of human labour. It is also true that the increased emphasis on selling as against production, together with the growth of the state apparatus—both consequences of monopoly capitalism—will alter the balance of labour requirements. Such changes are not, however, at all new: the breaking down of traditional skills through specialisation has been a permanent feature of capitalism.

Second, it is far from true that the new categories of workers thus called forth are less interested in pay than their predecessors or indeed than their contemporary industrial brothers. In Britain at least the whole history of twentieth century trade union development has been to draw more and more of them into forms of trade union action no doubt often less advanced than those of experienced industrial workers, but by no means always so. The A.E.S.D., the A.Sc.W., A.S.S.E.T., Equity, Nalgo, A.B.T., A.C.T., the I.P.C.S., the N.U.T. and a host of others, to say nothing of more august bodies like the B.M.A., the Association of First Division Civil Servants, or the Association of University Teachers, are each, with varying degrees of class consciousness and organisational skill, pressing their material interests upon their employers.

Third, it is nonsense to suggest that the job of a copy typist, a bank teller, a technician in a routine testing laboratory, or a local government clerk, not to mention that of a teacher facing a class of forty, is more satisfying in itself, in the sense of all-round achievement and social purpose that it gives, as compared with that of an engine driver, a tool maker, or a packer of biscuits. Galbraith either forgets or does not know that class society stamps labour, even mental labour, in two ways: it makes it one-sided, keeping the more satisfying form (which may at that be the calculations for the flight of an H-bomb rocket) for a tiny minority, and converting the rest to routine, one-sided operations whose very stunting effect is one important cause of and reason for the fight for leisure as a means of redressing the balance. But it also makes it into labour that is performed under an external discipline, imposed not by the needs of the social division of labour and of human co-operation, but by the need to exploit for profit. Certainly there are new forms of differentiation within the working class which Marxists need to analyse and take into account in their practical work. But they are differences, new stratification, *within* the working class and do not provide evidence of any New Class.

Marxists are often challenged to show where their classification of social groups, in terms of relationships to the means of production, is more true or useful than that of modern sociological

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stratification. The answer is not only that our analysis explains so many of the more obvious and persistent facts of capitalist life, but above all that, through the theory of surplus value which rests on our class analysis, it explains both the possibility of and the necessity for the process of capital accumulation. And this capital accumulation forms the basis not only of the Marxist theory of capitalist development, but also of all that is fruitful in the modern theory of growth.

III

"Social Imbalance" and the Agonising Reappraisal in Economic Ideas

The whole approach in this book involves a major reorientation and development of bourgeois economic theory comparable to two others of the last twenty-five years, the "Keynesian Revolution" of the thirties, and the Growth Theories of the late forties and of the fifties. Until the mid-1930's bourgeois theory had treated the capitalist economy as a self-regulating mechanism automatically producing full employment; with Keynes, it accepts the facts of the general crisis, but claims that "piecemeal social engineering" [in Popper's phrase] could preclude the need for fundamental social change. From the end of World War Two, faced by both national movements demanding industrialisation and the potentially very rapid growth of the socialist sector of the world economy, bourgeois economics began, and is still engaged in carrying through, a major reorientation designed to review every concept in the light of economic development. Galbraith's book represents, I believe, the first steps towards a third and more drastic change of front in face of the exigencies of peaceful competition.

It involves a more drastic change of front because, first, it reintroduces into the framework of economic discussion that consideration of the goals or purposes of any economic system which, under the name of "value judgments", has been as dirty a word as "peace". It seems highly likely that the increased respectability of the former is not unconnected with that of the latter!

Second, it attacks the traditional conception of consumers' tastes as an independent, given, phenomenon, it attacks "consumers' sovereignty", and hence attacks the primacy of consumption as the unquestioned goal of a capitalist economic system—with consequent sacrifice of the traditional aura of approval for a system which "gives consumers what they want" rather than "dictates to them what they shall have". Third, it exposes on the cold slopes of neglect those new-born twins, still scarcely dry behind the ears, Full Employment and Growth.

We should perhaps make clear at the outset that to put Galbraith's ideas in their social context is not intended as a substitute for their refutation. That comes later. But for once at least Marxists cannot be accused of imputing motives where none exist. Galbraith is clear, expressly so of the exigencies he is striving to meet:

> "A society has one higher task than to consider its goals. . . . It must also ensure its own survival. . . . The point is not difficult to make. Nor will persuasion be too difficult. This is another area where circumstance—and in this instance at almost terrifying speed—has been undermining the conventional wisdom. . . . The Soviet Union has revealed a breath-taking series of scientific and technical advances. . . . It has become evident that our failure to match this achievement was the result of a failure to concentrate the requisite resources upon the desired ends. . . . The nature of the deployment of resources that would best serve our survival is beyond the scope of this essay [he then deprecates faith in military solutions and speaks up for co-existence.—*R. B.*] . . . But whatever the paths to survival, the problem is the same. Were the Russians to disappear from the world, or become overnight as tractable as church mice, there would remain vast millions of hungry and *discontented people in the world. Without the* promise of relief from that hunger and privation, disorder would still be inevitable. The promise of such relief requires that we have available and usable resources. The requirement is of course more urgent in a world in which differing economic and political systems are in competition." (pp. 274-275.)

Consider now the first change of front. To speak of "social imbalance" is to make a judgment about the goals of an economy. As if to underline the change Galbraith uses as the motto for his title-page the dictum of that late Utilitarian economist, Alfred Marshall:

> "The economist, like everyone else, must also concern himself with the ultimate aims of man."

This may not strike the general reader as forcibly as it does the professional economist or student. But for a quarter of a century at least, and especially since Pigou's *Economics of Welfare* and Lionel Robbins' *Nature and Significance of Economic Science*, economic teaching outside the Marxist camp has insisted that the economist does not discuss goals; he is merely a technician who considers the economic implications of goals that others have set for him. "Economics," wrote Pigou in the 1920's, "is a positive science of what is and what tends to be, not a normative science of what ought to be." One might perhaps assume

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Galbraith guilty of a temporary aberration of judgment, to be condemned as such by his more objective colleagues, if it were not for the fact that identical sentiments in a much more consistent, theoretically respectable, form come from the Professor of Economics at Oxford, in the preface to a new volume of essays, which is called, significantly enough, "A Preface—and *a Manifesto*" (emphasis added, *R.B.*). This is worth quoting at length:

> "It is impossible to make economic proposals which do not have 'non-economic' aspects . . . when the economist makes a recommendation he is responsible for it in the round; all aspects of that recommendation, whether he choose to label them economic or not, are his concern" (J. R. Hicks: *Essays in World Economics*, Oxford, 1959, pp. x-xi).

The reasons which Hicks gives for his change of front become clear in a passage which also contains, quite patently, his own version of the affluent society. Galbraith had defined an affluent society as one already so rich that each increase in wealth brings in its train "a declining marginal urgency of output". Hicks, with the greater pretensions that become the theoretician, writes of "a new law of diminishing marginal significance of wealth":

> "We are not so affluent that the need for more wealth has disappeared; but it has become relatively less urgent. *The problems of combining security with freedom, equity with responsibility, come thereby more strongly to the fore. It is possible, by policy, to increase wealth, but to diminish freedom; it is possible, again, that the growth of knowledge,* though it must in some sense increase wealth or the possibility of wealth (with some kind of surplus of economic gains over losses) *may diminish the opportunities for freedom.* Technological progress is ethically neutral; what it gives with one hand it takes away with the other. . . . [Hicks then gives as instances that progress in the military arts "has not enhanced the opportunities for freedom", and that "the growing concentration of economic power in the hands of large organisations . . . is the major threat to freedom within Western societies". *R.B.*] . . . "What I do maintain is that *the liberal goods* [he has spoken earlier of "liberal values" in the usual sense of that term; this is clearly also what is intended by "liberal goods". *R.B.*] *are goods;* that they are values which must, however, be weighed up against other values. *Yet we can still feel that these ends are worthier ends than those represented in a production index.*" [emphasis added throughout, *R. B.*]

Much here becomes intelligible in the context of world changes. It is a context in which *materially* (in terms of quantity and quality of productive forces, including science and people—precisely the kind of things that go to change a production index!) the socialist world is showing marked superiority. It is a context where in ideology generally in the capitalist world a new defence is being constructed to confront people who are increasingly aware of the facts. It concedes the material superiority, but emphasises the accompanying spiritual and moral deprivation.

State Intervention

But that is not all. Already in the Keynesian analysis the need for *periodic* state intervention had been admitted. Already modern growth theory has seen the need to apply Keynesian techniques to the problems of ensuring "balanced growth" (this was a recurrent theme at the International Economic Association's 1956 Conference on Progress and Stability in the World Economy)—and hence the need for *chronic* state interference. Here now is a third case for chronic state interference, but on a higher, because non-economic plane—the case for removing social imbalance, in order to direct resources away from consumption into investment in education, research and foreign aid, in order to ensure *survival.*

Hicks puts the matter equally bluntly:

> "The case for non-interference in the economic sphere was initially the application in a particular field of a principle which has general applicability—the liberal case for non-interference" [this case was essentially that if each individual followed his own self-interest the general good would be served—this amounted to the complete justification for the harmony of the rights of private property and public interests. *R. B.*] "In the course of technological progress, and as the demands of the economic system in the direction of economic stability as well as of economic growth became more exacting, what had begun originally as an economic argument for non-interference became an economic argument for the opposite."

This is the dilemma they seek to resolve: at its present stage of development, faced by social demands for full employment from the working class, by demands for growth from the uncommitted countries, faced by the challenge of a socialist world which in output and consumption per head is beginning, in the words of the *New York Times*, to "breathe down our necks", state monopoly capitalism requires more state interference than ever before. But how can it reconcile the admission of this with the maintenance of the rights of private property? It can do it only by a simultaneous insistence on the unimportance of material standards, and the importance of "liberal values", which are primarily "spiritual".

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This is in essence what both Hicks and Galbraith, despite their different emphasis and modes of expression, are saying. (Hicks may even get good marks from leftward looking liberals for his attack upon the exaggerations of the individualist lunatic fringe "for whom all controls are a Road to Serfdom"). Their motives are unimportant; what is important is that their ideas provide in advance a theoretical strongpoint from which to counter-attack those who advocate the use of state interference, since state interference there must be, for the ends and aims of the working class. If the demand for employment stability becomes too insistent, if, in effect, the working class is not satisfied with some nebulous "high and stable level of employment" but wants genuine full employment, then it can be insisted that this demand must be tempered by the requirements of price stability, and that anyway the *economic* demands for full employment and growth must be tempered in the interests of the spiritual values. It now becomes respectable to interfere with consumers' choice in the interests of "higher" freedoms; it becomes not merely respectable, but morally more elevated, to insist that, after all, "there are more important things than a production index."

In light of this analysis, it is not surprising that Galbraith's practical proposals for the correction of social imbalance are either confused or downright reactionary. To call for more research, more education, more foreign aid, without considering the purposes of the first, the content as well as the extent of the second, and the terms of offer of the third, is of course infinitely preferable than to call for an expansion of the military programme. At least it represents the standpoint of stalemate and realism; and that is something. But it does not represent much of a programme around which to mobilise the American people for peace, especially when one considers that he proposes to achieve this switch of resources not by a cut in military expenditures but by a cut, or at least a restraint on, mass consumption through the imposition of a general sales tax. Indirect taxes, especially on articles of mass consumption, have always been opposed by socialists. It is noticeable that there is a trend towards their increased use in Britain, first in the later years of the Labour Government, and at a faster rate under the Tories. His other proposal, the substitution of a lower level of employment for full employment, however much it may be accompanied by face-saving increases in the level of employment benefits, is a dangerous measure. In a context where reactionaries are openly asking the question "How much unemployment is required to stop wage advances?" Galbraith, intentionally or not, puts weapons into the hands of demagogues whether they be Tories or "wage-freezers" in the Labour movement.

Nowhere does Galbraith take the obvious, and objectively progressive, step of finding resources for peaceful competition from cuts in the arms programme. Further, in presenting the problem as one of too much consumption and too little public spending, he obscures both the fact of the steady growth of the share of public spending in U.S. national output, and the sinister cause of that growth. The problem is *not* one of "public stinginess in the midst of private affluence". No doubt, the much slower growth in the U.S. than in capitalist countries generally of the minimal public services has, as many reviewers have suggested, a special explanation in the historical development of the United States. But the share of public spending in national output has there, as everywhere else under imperialism, risen steadily since the 1920's.

> "Government expenditure has grown much faster than the national product. . . . The proportion received and paid out by government has been growing larger. It now (1957) runs at more than one-fifth of national output, *or more than twice the government share in* 1929." [Twentieth Century Fund Study: *U.S.A. in New Dimensions*, 1957, emphasis added. *R.B.*]

The reason for the appearance of public stinginess is that while the proportion of U.S. national product taken by the government is lower than that taken in most of Western Europe, a much bigger proportion of total expenditure is on war and the effects of war. For peaceful social purposes there is stinginess; the horn of plenty flows freely for war. This is the present cause of social imbalance, and to suggest that one can conduct a realistic fight for peaceful co-existence without tackling it is either Utopian or misleading.

IV

Wants and the "Dependence Effect"

The restraint on consumption implied in his solution to the problem of social imbalance Galbraith justifies by two arguments: first, that all new or increased wants are produced by the producers of goods ("The Dependence Effect") and second, that at a high level of real income no one could really want more ("The Declining Marginal Urgency of Wants").

No Marxist would want to minimise the dependence effect. With it Galbraith has punctured the traditional myth of god-given wants, fixed for all time and forming the prime mover of the production process. He has emphasised that wants come

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from inside, not outside, society. By showing that wants are formed by a social process he has robbed of their chief weapon those who would argue against their deliberate change by conscious social action. But the "dependence effect" represents an incomplete, vulgarised picture. For in capitalist society, where status is based on material wealth, the possession of goods is the sign of success. No great pressure is therefore required by the advertisers; the desire to acquire is already there. The attack on Admass culture, on the vulgarity of TV advertising, have their progressive side. But the analysis is superficial, not to say demagogic. For it fails to probe to the deeper and more profoundly corrupt ethic of an acquisitive society which the Admen may reinforce, but did not create.

If all wants arose from the dependence effect, then the removal of advertising should weaken them. This Galbraith clearly believes. His justification is the concept of "the diminishing marginal urgency of wants". This concept sounds very like an old favourite, "the law of diminishing marginal utility" (known more familiarly to generations of students as: "the more you have of anything, the less urgently you want the extra bit"). And indeed it is. For both are based on a static view of human wants. Galbraith, in arguing for the social causation of wants, appeared to have escaped the view that "wants are given", yet here he falls back into the unashamedly idealist concept of a fixed human nature. But if wants are a social product, then by the very same social productive processes by which men develop new possibilities of life they also change themselves, they develop new wants. It is true that in class society the fruits of those possibilities go substantially into raising the wealth and leisure of the exploiters; but that of itself puts always in front of the exploited a living example of riches and lesiure. It is true that Marxists have spoken of abundance as a condition in which new social relations, those of Communism, emerge. But Communism is not a millennium in which all progress in technique, in human relations, and in human wants ceases.

In some of the analysis and attitudes which appear to lie behind his advocacy of objectively reactionary policies one has the feeling that, unconsciously, Galbraith is protesting not against the affluence of capitalist society but against its poverty. Not only is he worried by peaceful competition, but he dislikes certain aspects of bourgeois life. Yet everywhere he attributes to productive forces what is caused by production relations; everywhere he poses as problems of "affluence" what are problems of capitalism in decay. And indeed capitalism is a society of spiritual poverty which treats material goods not as a means to, but as the measure of, human achievement; it is a sick society in which an educated and not insensitive intellectual can see the mass of the people as incapable of deeper needs—such needs as are to be fulfilled not simply by more goods or more lesiure, but by a society which has eliminated the distinction between mental and manual labour, in which there is no division between "work", one-sided and unsatisfying, and "leisure", devoted to diversion, but only "activity", the harmonious development of the bodily and mental faculties of social man.

V

Conclusion

Communists have nothing but welcome for those of any class or outlook to whom peaceful co-existence is better than annihilation. If they seek to minimise the importance of material achievements we doubt if the world's half-starved millions will heed them. There was a time, well within the last decade, when capitalism was inordinately proud of its production indices. There was an earlier time when the great economists of progressive capitalism saw in its power to create wealth a proof of its ability to advance mankind. The production indices of socialism were hampered by a heritage of backwardness, attempted strangulation and war. This they have now overcome. But in the cultural and moral realm, in the realm of freedom, socialism has shown itself as from the very first a higher form of society. If therefore Professors Hicks and Galbraith seek a change of terrain in the ideological battle, they shift towards ground where we are strong and they are weak. We heartily welcome the change.

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Marxism as Science*

Maurice Cornforth

THE scientific discoveries of Karl Marx brought to the working class movement a knowledge of the nature of capitalist exploitation, of the causes of the hardships and difficulties experienced under capitalism, and, consequently, of what must be done to remove those causes. It has equipped the movement with a scientific theory which shows how to emancipate mankind from exploitation and build a society in which people can work in co-operation to satisfy their needs of life.

For centuries people have dreamed of a society in which social strife is unknown, in which one man does not live on the back of another, and in which all co-operate for the benefit of each and all. It long remained a mere utopia: no one could see how to bring such an order into being. In much the same way people dreamed of flying, but no one could see how to do it. However, when the petrol engine was invented, people possessed the means necessary to fly; and then, by discovering and applying the laws of aerodynamics, they succeeded in doing so. Similarly, when modern industry was created, there were created the means to produce enough to satisfy fully the needs of every human being. The conditions were there to do it, and in Marxism was worked out the science to show how to realise it.

The point then is to secure the union of the scientific theory of Marxism with the mass working-class movement. If the theory remains merely the possession of a few intellectuals it leads nowhere; if the labour movement lacks scientific theory it may go on struggling—sometimes with success and sometimes not—for immediate demands, but can bring about no social transformation; when they are united, then and only then can the struggle to build a new social order be effectively undertaken.

Fundamental Laws of Social Development

Human life has been going on in different parts of the globe for thousands of years, and in that time has given rise to a bewildering variety of social forms and social events. There have been tribes, kingdoms, republics, autocracies, oligarchies, democracies; there have been religious and cultural movements, wars, massacres and revolutions; great men have risen to fame, rousing people to stirring deeds, and bestowing both injuries and benefits. The painstaking research of historians has got all these things arranged into a time sequence—so that we know what was the social set-up and what happened at one place and time, and what happened next.

Is it possible to find out more than merely what happened? Is it possible to discover, within the medley of social events, objective laws the operation of which would explain how and why the events followed the course they did?

This question requires some clarification if it is not to be reduced to absurdity. If the question is posed of finding objective laws such that they would explain why, for instance, Julius Caesar was assassinated on the Ides of March and not on some other date, or why he adopted Octavian as his heir rather than someone else—then it is reduced to absurdity. There is no need to doubt that whatever happens has a cause; but the operations of a multitude of particular causes cannot be reduced to general laws which will explain why each particular cause came into being and operated in just the way it did. The sensible question is that of finding certain processes within the events, the operations of which can be defined in terms of general laws, and such that all the particular events accord with the operation of those processes and may be said to be conditioned by them.

Such processes and such laws governing them were what Marx discovered within human society, thus laying the foundations of social science—just as, at approximately the same time, Charles Darwin laid the foundations of biological science.

Marx's discovery took the scientific form of a very bold and general hypothesis, which can be tested and verified by comparison with the historical record, past and present. But it was not by any means merely an inspired guess—it was reached by a very simple and logical operation of thought. Such an operation consists in asking the right question, one to which the answer becomes obvious. This is how most great scientific discoveries are made. Indeed, Marx simply followed a standard procedure of science.

The key question for social science is as follows:

> *Whatever form society may take, and whatever social activities may be going on, is there any single unvarying condition which must*

* Marx Memorial Lecture, March 14th, 1960.

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always be satisfied in order that any society and social life can exist at all?

Once this question is asked, the answer becomes obvious. It was put by Engels, in his speech at Marx's graveside when he summed up Marx's scientific work:

> "Mankind must first of all eat, drink, have shelter and clothing, before it can pursue politics, science, art, religion, etc.; therefore the production of the immediate material means of subsistence, and consequently the degree of economic development attained by a given people or during a given epoch, form the foundation upon which the state institutions, the legal conceptions, the ideas on art, and even on religion, of the people concerned have been evolved, and in the light of which they must, therefore, be explained. . . ."

The single, unvarying, necessary condition for any society is that men should associate to produce their material means of subsistence. The process of social production is, therefore, the primary process of all social life. It is "primary" in this precise sense: that social life begins with it, that it is present continuously throughout all social life, and that no other social activity can occur unless this primary process sustains it.

I said that this proposition was obvious. Indeed, until we meet with a society which has politics, religion and art without anyone engaging in production, until we meet soldiers or politicians or philosophers who live on air and do not require the labour of workers to sustain them, its truth will be unassailable. It is from such simple and obvious truths that great scientific discoveries are compounded.

From this beginning, Marx went on to frame a general hypothesis, consisting of several interconnected parts, which together may be said to constitute a general law of social development.

(1) In order to carry on production people must enter into relations of production. These are concerned with property in means of production, and with the mode of distribution of the product, and in their totality they define the economic structure of society.

(2) People enter into relations of production, and so associate with one another in an economic organisation, independent of any conscious decision but corresponding to the character of their productive forces. That is to say, people who depend for their subsistence on certain production techniques evolve property relations—and, consequently, class relations—appropriate to those techniques. For instance, a primitive hunting tribe will live the social life of primitive communism. When animals are domesticated, the herds will tend to become the property of particular families within the community. Modern factories were developed by capitalists who employed wage labour. And so on.

(3) Social institutions, and with them prevailing systems of ideas, will then arise corresponding to the economic structure of society. They will be such as serve the carrying on of the prevailing mode of production. For instance, a primitive tribe could hardly possess a legislative assembly, or a standing army and police force, or universities; on the other hand, institutions such as these are required for carrying on a modern capitalist society. Only when a certain economic basis exists do such institutions arise.

These three propositions make up the key to explaining how social development proceeds and how the various historical features of society arise and change.

Fetters on Development

Corresponding to certain forces of production, certain relations of production come into being. Within these production relations new forces of production eventually develop. Then the situation arises when, in Marx's words, the old production relations begin to act as "fetters" upon the further development of production. The relations of production have then to be changed; and the force operating to bring about such change is the class or classes in society who feel most strongly the thwarting effect of the existing production relations. Such was, for instance, the rising capitalist class in feudal times, and such is the working class today. To change the economic structure, a struggle takes place against the whole complex of institutions and ideas which were the product of and served that structure: against them are pitted new ideas and demands for new institutions. The economic structure of the new society, and the general character of its institutions and ideas, will be the products of this struggle.

This general hypothesis of Marx about the laws of social development consists of postulating a dynamic relation between three factors in society —the forces of production, the relations of production, and the social superstructure of institutions and ideas. The law is a law of a dynamic relation of correspondence between these three factors. This law was stated by Marx as necessary and invariable: it will always be found operating in any human society.

The key scientific step taken by Marx, then, after the point was made that every society depends on maintaining the process of production, was to abstract the three basic variables—the forces of production, the relations of production, and the superstructure—and to postulate their

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necessary dynamic inter-relation. This provides the general law at the foundation of social science. It was, as Marx said, "the guiding thread" for all social studies. The social events of any place or time can be explained as exemplifying the operation of this general law.

It is worth stressing once again that this is something simple and obvious. It is indeed hard to see how anything different could arise in society. Could production relations arise which were inappropriate to the given forces of production? Or when they become fetters on production, would it be possible to avoid a struggle for new production relations? Again, could a society survive, the institutions of which failed to serve its basic economic processes? Could such institutions possibly be formed? And when such institutions grow outmoded, would it be possible to avoid a struggle to change them? If we ask such questions as these the laws formulated by Marx begin to have the same obvious and compelling look as, for instance, the laws of thermodynamics. One might as well ask whether a physical system could create energy from nothing. If an engine were built which ran without fuel, that would contradict the laws of thermodynamics. And if a society were created in which there was no correspondence of production, economic structure and social superstructure, that would contradict the laws of social development as formulated by Marx. But there is no such engine, and no such society. Such fundamental laws of science are always verified by all the relevant facts, and no instances which would falsify them are ever to be found.

Marx and Darwin

In his speech, which I have already quoted, at Marx's graveside, Engels said that: "Just as Darwin discovered the law of development of organic nature, so Marx discovered the law of development of human history." Here Engels stressed, what I am trying to bring out here, that Marx's discovery was a scientific one: a discovery of laws of development operating in the objective world. It was not a prophetic utterance, it was not an article of faith. It enunciated laws which can know no exception, but it was not a dogma. This discovery was made, and is verified, by the application of scientific methods differing not at all from the methods employed with equal success in other branches of science.

It is useful and instructive to follow up Engels's suggestion and to examine briefly the parallel between the work and discoveries of Marx and Darwin. It will be found that the evidence for Marx's theory of human history is in essentials of the same character as that for Darwin's theory of the evolution of species by natural selection. They are scientific theories of a similar type, and they rest on very much the same type of hypothesis and evidence. This is a fact which seems to have escaped the attention of such authorities on scientific method as Professor Karl Popper, or Bertrand Russell.

The theories of Marx and Darwin agree in being theories of evolution. And they are in harmony—that is to say, Marx's account of how human society developed agrees entirely with Darwin's account of how organic life evolved up to the appearance of the species Man. They together constitute a consistent whole, placing man and human society in the context of organic life on the earth's surface. At the same time, these theories were developed independently. The remarkable coincidence of the scientific methods and conclusions of Marx and Darwin are not due to one having been influenced by the other. The first formulations of Marx's theory antedated Darwin. And Darwin, who published *The Origin of Species* eleven years after the appearance of *The Communist Manifesto* and, as it happened, in the same year as Marx's *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, the preface of which contained Marx's mature summary of his theory, was certainly not influenced by Marx. The parallel was due to the fact that each was an outstanding scientific investigator, and so employed the scientific methods latent in the process of scientific investigation itself, and reached conformable conclusions.

The suggestion which is sometimes made that Marx used a special method of investigation of his own—the dialectical method—previously unknown and still unknown to any but Marxists, simply obscures the scientific character of Marx's work. There is no need to claim proprietorship of a special method for establishing and verifying Marxist conceptions: the accepted methods of science amply suffice for that purpose. Indeed, if this were not so the opponents of Marxism would be right to deny its scientific character. For those who reach conclusions by methods other than the tried methods of science are known as cranks or charlatans and not as men of science. But as Lenin said, and as Marx himself made clear in his Preface to the first volume of *Capital*, Marx's dialectical method "is nothing but the scientific method applied in sociology". (Lenin, *What the Friends of the People are, and how they fight the Social Democrats.*)

The starting point of Darwin's theory is a very simple and obvious truth about the necessary and invariable conditions for the existence of any form of organic life—namely, that organisms live

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in an environment from which they obtain their requirements of life. Any variation in an organism, therefore, may be favourable or unfavourable for survival. Darwin then took into account two facts, the variability of organisms and the varying character of environments, and postulated a dynamic relation between organisms and environments, such that favourable variations would be selected for survival and unfavourable ones eliminated, thus leading to the evolution of species.

Darwin applied this law to explain the multiplicity of existing species and the relationships between them. The observed facts accord with the law, just as the social record accords with the law of social development stated by Marx.

General Laws

The theories are alike in their simplicity, their generality, and their obviousness: one can see just how it happened and could only have happened like that. They are alike in that their foundation consists of singling out a universal and invariable condition for the existence of the phenomena under investigation, and from that going on to frame a hypothesis stating an invariable dynamic relation. And they are alike in that the simple laws enunciated have explanatory power in relation to an enormously wide field of instances. In each case there is massive evidence, and all of it backs up the theory.

Another feature of both Marxism and Darwinism is that the fundamental laws which they have discovered are not deterministic in form. Like certain theories in the physical sciences, these theories do not deal with the determination of individual events but with the consequences over a period of time of a large number of individual interactions. The Darwinian theory deals with the consequences of the variability of organisms in varying environments: in the long run the consequences must be the evolution of species by natural selection. As to what makes organisms vary, that is a matter of investigation by genetics and bio-chemistry. Similarly, Marx's theory deals with the consequences of human individuals living in society: whatever their individual intentions, their mutual interaction in society must always lead to their using such productive forces as are to hand, to their forming production relations corresponding to those productive forces, and to the formation of corresponding institutions and ideas. And this must determine the general character of their society. As Marx himself put it: "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please." (*Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte.*) As to the causes of individual actions, these may be studied by psychology.

Just because the theories of both Marx and Darwin deal with the overall consequences of a large number of individual events, and not with the determination of each event in detail, both theories have the same capacity of recognising in particular instances the results of particular causes which could not have been forecast in terms of the general laws alone. Thus Darwinism can account for many odd features of species in terms of such particular causes. And similarly, it is no objection to Marxism to point, say, to the relatively full employment in Britain since the Second World War and to claim that this contradicts Marx's statements about the reserve army of unemployed under capitalism. On the contrary, there are particular causes affecting employment in Britain at this time which the general Marxist theory is fully capable of recognising. If, indeed, the British capitalists had sacrificed their profits for the relief of the poor and needy, that, it is true, would have contradicted the general Marxist theory. But they have never yet done so.

Both the Darwinian and Marxist theories, then, share the breadth and flexibility characteristic of all fundamental theories of science, which enables them to embrace the multiform operation of a large variety of particular causes.

Opposition to Darwin and to Marx

So far as scientific foundation and evidence go, the grounds for accepting Marxism are about equal to those for accepting Darwinism. And to reject one is just about as obscurantist as to reject the other: it belongs to just about the same level of obscurantism as to believe that the earth is flat. Nevertheless both theories agree in another point, and that is that neither has had an easy passage on the way to general acceptance. If nothing else stands in the way, people will generally come to accept evidence; but there are prejudices and preconceptions which refuse to listen to evidence.

The really frenzied resistance against Darwin's theory of evolution was due to the fact that it overthrew some very deep-seated prejudices. Much earlier, the followers of Copernicus had been condemned for demonstrating that the earth was merely a planet of the sun, because this seemed to deny the central place in God's creation supposed to be occupied by man, the lord of the earth. But the discoveries of Darwin did much worse. They offended in three ways. First, they further undermined the special position of man as a being separate from the rest of the animal world, the supreme creation of God and possessor of an immortal soul, by showing how man had naturally evolved from the higher apes.

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Second, especially when conjoined with contemporary discoveries in geology, they undermined the entire myth of the Creation, according to which God created the earth, complete with all the species of plants and animals, as the abode of man. Third, they upset what had always been the most forceful argument for the existence of God, namely, the so-called argument from design. If the grass feeds the cow, and the cow gives us milk—so this argument ran—then surely that is proof of the wondrous design of the Creator. But now it was shown how all this could come about by natural selection, without any design at all. In short, by showing how the species of organisms had evolved by natural selection, Darwin provided a materialist explanation of the forms of life, and destroyed the basis for an entire edifice of idealist theory which had long stood unchallenged by any but a few extreme radicals.

That great controversy has long ago been settled in favour of Darwin's theory of evolution. Except by some rather naive persons in the United States of America—that modern home of lost causes—it is accepted as proved. And the idealists, including even theologians of the Catholic Church, have to re-write their theories to fit it.

As compared with the theory of evolution, the social theory of Marxism gives the same kind of offence, though to an aggravated degree, and other and worse offence besides. It may be said to offend on two levels.

In the first place, while Darwin overthrew the positions of idealism on the origins of the species Man, Marxism overthrows idealism on questions of man's social life. It shows how men form societies, and frame their ideas and principles, on the basis of the material process of production. It shows how the whole of human development, material and spiritual, is conditioned by the development of the material conditions of man's social existence. Thus the whole idea of the sanctity, rationality or permanence of given human institutions is overthrown. And the last stronghold of idealism—the conception of human consciousness as having its ultimate source in something other than the material world—is thrown down.

In the second place, the application of Marxist theory in the investigation of contemporary capitalist society demonstrates the temporary, transient character of the capitalist mode of production. It shows it as the culmination of a series of methods of exploitation of human labour; it demonstrates the contradiction between the increasing socialisation of production under capitalism and the private capitalist appropriation of the product; it demonstrates the contradiction between the anarchy of capitalist production as a whole and the planning of production in the individual production unit; it demonstrates the inescapability of the class struggle; and finally, it clearly shows that these contradictions can be resolved only by the working class, at the head of all working people, taking power, socialising the means of production, distribution and exchange, and commencing to build a socialist society in which the whole of production is planned for the common well-being.

If social science demonstrates these conclusions, then social science cannot be accepted within the capitalist order. And so, while most historians have by now had to admit, by the back door, as it were, and usually without acknowledgment, much of the Marxist interpretation of past history, when it comes to the present they all, together with all the economists, sociologists and political theorists, at whatever cost in inconsistency and confusion, repudiate the Marxist theory.

Marxism was and remains the theory of the working-class movement, within the ranks of which alone could such a theory be worked out, accepted and used.

Marxism and the Working Class Movement

What, then, is the use of Marxist theory to the working-class movement? Its use is threefold. (1) It arms the movement with scientific knowledge of the actual social position of the working class. (2) It enables the movement scientifically to formulate practical aims. And (3) it guides the movement in working out the necessary strategy and tactics for achieving those aims.

(1) That the employers pay as little as they can and get as much work for it as they can, and that they are prepared to throw any number of workers on the scrapheap if it is not profitable to employ them, are facts which became very familiar from the beginning of the system of wage labour, however the employers and their literary hirelings might try to disguise or embellish them. The working-class movement arose in order to defend and improve conditions of work: to know what those conditions were, and to unite for the aim of improving them, required no science. The first use of Marxism to the working-class movement is not, then, to acquaint us with such obvious facts, but is to enable us to understand how such facts arose and what are their causes. Marxism gives the working class knowledge of how the system of capitalist exploitation originated, and of how it works. The worker occupies a position within a historically constituted system of production relations; and so long as those relations exist, so long must he struggle in combina-

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tion to maintain whatever advantages in employment and social conditions he has already won, and to improve his lot if he can.

(2) Making clear to the working class its true social position, Marxism enables the working-class movement to formulate scientifically the aim of socialism.

Once again, for workers to conceive the aim of improving their standards of life, requires no science: they adopt this aim quite spontaneously, as a result of the very social conditions under which they live. Nor does it require the aid of science to dream up conceptions of a utopia, in which everyone would be ruled by reason and there would be no exploitation and no strife, and in which, as the old English poem of *The Land of Cokaygne* put it:

> Every man takes what he will,
> As of right, to eat his fill.*

What Marxism does is to demonstrate that modern large-scale production can be planned to satisfy the needs of all, on condition that capitalist ownership is replaced by socialist ownership. This is the revolutionary change in the social relations of production which becomes appropriate after capitalism has already transformed former small-scale individual production into large-scale social production, and has developed the sciences and techniques necessary for such social production.

With socialism, the exploitation of man by man will be ended. This ending of all exploitation of man by man is not posed as a utopia, as an ideal, but as a step appropriate to the actual development of social production, and necessary if that production is to be carried on so as to satisfy the needs of the whole of society. This is the conclusion of a strictly scientific examination of actual social production relations, as they have evolved in the course of human history.

Marxism, therefore, making clearly known to the working class its actual position in society, shows that its struggle can have only one end—and that is when the working class, through its organisations, wins such power in society as to be able to abolish capitalist production relations, that is, capitalist private property, and introduce the socialisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange.

This, therefore, is the aim which the Marxist science of society places before the working class movement.

The Science of Ends

Here it is worth stressing a unique feature of the science of society. In relation to social action, it is not a science of means only, but of ends.

Natural science, on the other hand, is and can only be a science of means. For example, the discovery of radio waves proved very useful in showing how to manufacture new and very efficient means of communication; but as to the human ends, aims or purposes of communication, Maxwell's equations could have nothing to say. Again, discoveries about nuclear fission provided the means both to produce a new and cheap source of electrical energy, and also powerful and poisonous explosions useful for the aim of killing and injuring a very large number of people in a short space of time. The natural sciences are completely neutral as to the ends which their discoveries may be used to serve; they can have nothing to say about these ends, since they deal simply with natural forces and not with human actions. For this reason, the idea has gained very wide currency, and is accepted as a truism in bourgeois philosophy, that while science has provided us with a great deal of knowledge which we can apply for human ends, those ends themselves lie outside the field of possible scientific investigation. They are the subject matter of morals, or religion, or politics, on which science can throw no light.

Unhappily, a good many people in the labour movement are content to accept this point of view. For them, socialism is a moral question, and its justification is moral. Indeed, moralising has always been prevalent in British politics, on both sides. Thus for Mr. Gaitskell and his friends, the fundamental belief of socialism is that it is wrong for capitalists to run industries as they please, without social restraint, and that this wrong should be righted. Then, on further reflection, it is added that it would also be wrong to deprive capitalists of investments without giving them very full compensation; that it would be wrong to pass over their undoubted managerial abilities, and so they should rightly be left in charge; and, finally, that the true aim is simply brotherhood. All this is an example of how moralising often serves to lead us up the garden path, and in practice means leaving things very much as they are while talking largely of high and vague ideals.

Yet the whole idea that science cannot enlighten us about human ends and purposes, but can be of use only in finding means, is quite false; and this false idea can arise only because of the identification of science with natural science, and the neglect or repudiation of social science. For the science of society demonstrates how human ends and purposes are formed out of the material conditions of social life, even when people are not conscious that that is how their ends are shaped. Studying the laws of development of

* See A. L. Morton, *The English Utopia*, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1952.

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social life, science is able to formulate very exactly the aim of the working class movement today—that is, the aim of socialism.

Of course, the same science demonstrates that only a part of society can work for this aim, while the other part is bound to oppose. Socialism can be gained only through bitter struggle. But when socialism is consolidated, then the whole of society has the further aim of building communism, which means: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."

It is no more strange that social science should be a science which deals with ends than that natural science should not include the concept of ends. Science as a whole, which includes social science, includes not merely the study of means but also the study of ends. There is no need to leave the formulation of human purpose to non-scientific modes of thought.

When they hear this, some people are apt to say: But what about art and culture and the pursuit of happiness? Science can know only economic ends, and so has still nothing to say about the true values of human life. But that is absurd. Of course, the aim of communism includes realising all the riches of human life which communism can bring, and which have hitherto been denied to the greater part of the human race. Marx put the point in these words:

> "The realm of freedom begins only where labour which is determined by necessity and mundane consideration ceases." In the economic field, "freedom can only consist in . . . the associated producers rationally regulating their interchange with nature, bringing it under their common control . . . and achieving this with the least expenditure of energy and under conditions most favourable to, and worthy of, their human nature. But it none the less remains a realm of necessity. Beyond it begins that development of human energy which is an end in itself, the true realm of freedom, which, however, can blossom forth only with this realm of necessity as its basis. The shortening of the working day is its basic prerequisite." (*Capital*, Vol. III, chapter 48.)

So here we find that Marx formulated the aim of communism like this: People in association, and using all the resources of natural science and technology, will plan the production of their material needs and produce those needs with the least expenditure of time and energy. This will leave them free, for the greater part of their time, to devote their energies to all that human beings are capable of, apart from simply producing their material needs.

A vivid picture of people living like this was drawn by William Morris in *News from Nowhere*. It was not a utopia, but an imaginative forecast of a possible future, based on scientific socialism.

The Way to Realise the Aim

(3) Having formulated the aim of socialism and communism, Marxist science assists the working class to work out the strategy and tactics necessary to realise that aim. This application of science falls into two parts, yielding first certain general principles, and secondly particular policies framed to cope with particular situations and phases of struggle.

The most general conclusions of Marxism on the strategy of achieving socialism may be summarised in three general principles:

(*a*) It is necessary to pursue a policy of working-class struggle against the capitalist class, uniting always the maximum forces to defeat the main enemy.

(*b*) This struggle must be carried to the point where the working class, with its allies, is able to gain political power such as to be able to establish socialism and overcome all resistance against this.

(*c*) To achieve this position of power, the working class must be led by a political party dedicated to the aim of socialism and guided by scientific socialist theory.

These, then, are general principles which admit of absolutely no exception. To go against them amounts in practice to abandoning the aim of socialism and the means to realise it.

Within the framework of general principles there is then the problem of finding the right policies to meet each eventuality that arises. And here, it must be allowed, a large element of variation and improvisation comes in. Those dogmatists have a strange idea of applying social science, who imagine that it is possible to state in advance everything that is going to happen, and to lay down precise rules for determining correct policies.

It is obvious that waging a class struggle is a very different kind of undertaking from, for example carrying out an engineering project. Engineers have control over all the factors which operate to produce the end-result, and so can manipulate those factors so as to produce a predictable effect—though even so, unforeseen factors may appear which upset their plans. Some social theorists nowadays speak of "social engineering". This extraordinarily inaccurate and unscientific concept appears to tie up with the dream of the so-called managerial revolution—in which self-appointed but benevolent social managers will manipulate human motives, by propaganda, incentives and deterrents, so as to produce pre-

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dictable consequences. But the emergence of such a brave new world hardly accords with the actual laws of social development. In the working-class struggle it is possible and necessary to make an analysis of the salient facts of a given situation, to forecast the probable behaviour of individuals, classes and groups in such a situation, and in the light of that to arrive at a plan of action. But at the same time, control is lacking over nearly all these factors; even the way in which decisions taken within the movement are carried out depends on the tightness or looseness of organisation, the waging of internal controversies, and all manner of subjective factors influencing individuals. Hence the contingent and the unforeseen necessarily plays a large part in the politics of class struggle. It becomes extraordinarily difficult to make an analysis free from error—especially when, as often happens, there is little time available—or to carry out a plan exactly as planned. And so a wise leadership is one which has no illusions of infallibility and is constantly on the alert to draw conclusions from new experiences.

For this reason, some people think that a political struggle guided by science is a contradiction in terms. For they think that science only applies in fields where full accuracy of analysis and prediction can be achieved. But the application of science in politics means recognising the fluidity of the course of struggle within the bounds of the general laws of social development, and consequently flexibility of policy based on taking into account new events and the new possibilities to which they may give rise.

Science and Communism

The consolidation of socialism, followed by the evolution of socialism into communism, means the ending of exploitation of man by man, and with that the ending of class struggles. Evidently, therefore, the future conditions of human social activity will, in that event, be very different from the past.

This, it may be explained, is not a matter of prophesying the inevitable and happy future of mankind. Science can know of no unconditional inevitability. And we would lack the faculty of scientific inference if we did not recognise that no such future may ever come about if, meantime, the world is devastated and the atmosphere poisoned by nuclear warfare. It is a matter, rather, of the scientific formulation of the communist objective.

With communism, then, as the *Communist Manifesto* put it, "all production has been concentrated in the hands of a vast association of the whole nation". This implies that the whole mode of application of social science is changed. It is no longer a question of formulating objectives of class struggle, and of guiding the waging of class struggle in conditions under which many factors determining the outcome are beyond control. With communism, in the words of Engels:

> "Man's own social organisation, hitherto confronting him as a necessity imposed by nature and history, becomes the result of his own free action. The extraneous objective forces which have hitherto governed history pass under the control of man himself." (*Socialism, Utopian and Scientific.*)

Social science then becomes a question of estimating the material needs of society, estimating the current material and human resources available to secure the satisfaction of those needs, and then planning production and distribution accordingly. Thus it becomes an exact, mathematical and quantitative discipline, like the natural sciences applied in the techniques of production.

This change corresponds to the situation in which, as Engels also puts it, "the government of persons has been replaced by the administration of things". The task of social science under communism is not to work out—in the manner of the social engineering already mentioned—ways and means of manipulating human beings so as to force or cajole them into some predetermined pattern of social activity. The task is to work out the plan of production and distribution for the whole community, to be undertaken with the minimum of labour, so that people may on that basis freely enjoy that blossoming forth of human energy which is an end in itself.

Writing of the tasks of science in his early *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, Marx said:

> "Natural science will in time subsume under itself the science of man, just as the science of man will subsume under itself natural science: there will be *one* science."

The subject of science will be the laws of development of nature and human society, and the ways and means of man's securing the continuous satisfaction, through social production, of his material needs.

The great contribution of Marxism is that it discovered the fundamental laws of social life, and so laid the basis for that development of the science of man which is needed to bring about the flowering of human life.

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Proposals for the Arts

Barbara Niven

INCREASES in Government grants for the arts, recently announced, have an immediate background of demands and of discussion in the House of Commons and the House of Lords. This discussion revealed attitudes to opportunities for the use of the people's leisure-time which it is enormously interesting to examine. The increases have a further and unquestionably operative background of programmes for help for the arts and for the extension of opportunities for leisure produced, during the last year, by the Labour Party—*Leisure for Living*; the Gulbenkian Foundation's *Help for the Arts*; the Arts Council's Annual Report 1958-9 *Struggle for Survival;* and the Bow Group's *Patronage for the Arts* (reviewed in the March issue of *Marxism Today*).

I want to look back, after a brief review of present discussions, to these, to examine what they offer and what attitudes they express to the masses of the British workers for whom, in this country of enormous expenditure and profits—and of a still large relative amount of prosperity—so many doors to enjoyment of leisure through all the arts and sports are still closed.

The Lords on Leisure

But first, the Lords discussing a motion on "Problems and Opportunities of Leisure" on March 2nd. There is the benign dream, shaped by Privilege, of the Duke of Devonshire—"I should like to think that what until recently have been considered purely the rich man's pleasures will become those of very large numbers of people: that riding, shooting, fishing and yachting will not be for the privileged few but for the many. . . . As another approach to the way in which Her Majesty's Government might give facilities for pleasure, I should like to see the Ministry of Agriculture ensure that this country is criss-crossed with bridlepaths for those who wish to ride, and that the hedgerows are well stocked with game for those who wish to shoot: and last, but by no means least, that the rivers of this country are clean, unpolluted, and full of fish."

What William Morris would have to say to that vision! I can only here refer readers to *The Dream of John Ball.*

Behind this is the sharper view of the Earl of Arran, moving the motion. "I cannot believe that leisure is a matter for governments or for legislation of any kind. A Ministry of Culture or Sport is an abhorrent thought: it smacks of totalitarianism." He looks towards the trade unions. "I conceive that the purpose of that massive organisation, the T.U.C., is to care for the welfare of its members in every form. This it does most faithfully on the practical side. But one may be allowed to wonder whether, in the struggle for more pay and better conditions, it does not sometimes tend to overlook the longer term and even more essential parts of its task. . . . I have not been able to find any evidence so far that it is occupying itself with the problem of *keeping the workers contented after* it has secured for them the material benefits which it seeks." [This was challenged by Lord Stonham (previously Victor Collins, Labour M.P. for Shoreditch and Finsbury) who pointed out that many trade unions have extensive and expensive education and training, and contribute to the W.E.A. and the N.C.L.C. schemes, but that individual trade unionists do not, unfortunately, support them as they should.]

Challenge was sounded here, however, on present expenditures. Above all by Lord Esher on the fact that this country, with a budget of £5,000 million, cannot afford £2 million to build a national theatre; from him came this vital protest:

> "If £100 million is added to the £1,500 million that is usually spent on obsolete armaments that everybody knows cannot be used, no letter of protest appears in the Press: and the Opposition cannot bring themselves to oppose the nuclear war either."

The extent to which that, key to the whole business of expenditure on the arts, is true, directly and even indirectly, was shown in the House of Commons on February 26th, when Julian Snow (Labour Lichfield and Tamworth) called for the appointment of a Royal Commission of Enquiry and for more Government aid to the fine arts in Britain. When he went so far as to say that "he did not conceal that his private preference would be for a Ministry of Fine Arts", neither he nor any other Labour member (any member for that matter) touched upon this enormous and governing unbalance in Britain's finance. Modest increases announced by Sir Edward Boyle, financial secretary to the Treasury, were:

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Arts Council

Grants to be raised by 23 per cent in the forthcoming year to a total of £1,500,000 an increase of nearly £300,000 over last year.

Drama

Expenditure to be doubled from about £80,000 in 1959-60 to £160,000 in 1960-61, the "lion's share of which will go to provincial repertory companies."

Music

Grants will go up by 25 per cent. The Hallé Orchestra will receive £22,000 in the forthcoming year, compared with £12,000 a year, while Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra will also receive an increased grant.

Ballet and Opera

Allowances to be increased by 30 per cent, excluding Covent Garden, over £300,000 of which —roughly two-thirds—will be spent in the provinces. Grants to Scotland also to be increased.

The Arts Council have arranged that the provinces should have between forty and fifty weeks of opera and operetta in 1960-61. Most would be provided by Sadler's Wells and total grant to Sadler's Wells would be increased from £205,000 to £275,000.

There would be fifty-five to sixty weeks of ballet for the provinces; half given by Ballet Rambert, half by Royal Ballet.

Museums and Galleries

For 1960-61, Parliament would be asked to approve for national museums and galleries (excluding science museums) an increase of 13 per cent, £350,000. Sir Edward, disclosing that an offer of £50,000 has been made by the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, for the Rubens picture "The Holy Family", said that if this offer was accepted the Government would present a supplementary estimate shortly to make a special grant.

The gallery, he said, was in a position to pay up to £25,000, including a substantial contribution from the Liverpool rate fund.

Building needs are also to be considered. phased in next five or six years. Grant to Victoria and Albert Museum, out of which assistance is given to provincial museums towards cost of acquisitions, to be increased from £2,000 to £15,000. Minister of Education suggests further increase for 1960-61, to £25,000.

British Film Institute

Discussions in progress. Expenditure 1960-61 up from £50,000 to £97,000.

British Museum

For experimental period in 1960-61, the front hall, Reading Room, North Library would be kept open till 9.30 p.m. in place of 5 p.m., two evenings a week.

He tempered the announcement of increases with the comment: "People should not be forced into cultural experiences. They had to discover them for themselves." Conservative member W. Rees Davies had given a tart edge to that with the Tory diehard's grudging and expressive view: "It is most important that the public should pay all along the line for the pleasure they enjoy. We should pay to enter our museums and galleries. When people pay they enjoy it more."

Minor but salient point and pressures for more and extended facilities came chiefly from our Labour M.P.s. They had already surfaced in the programmes, notably their own.

To these must be added the pressure from the London County Council, with strong Conservative support, to start building the long-planned, universally supported National Theatre on the South Bank. And here again, the sixty-four thousand dollar question surfaced from Hugh Jenkins, Secretary of Equity. Saying that it would now cost nearer £2 million than £1 million, he asked: "Is this a very large sum of money? Every rocket site costs £10 million a year. Could we not manage £2 million for our national theatre?"

The Arts Council's Programme

And now to the programmes. It is important to consider the Arts Council's *Struggle for Survival* first, its Fourteenth Annual Report. In depressing continuity from their "Few but Roses" it is worlds apart from their 1946 beginnings. That stretch contains much of the tragic story of the suppressions and blockings of the great and lively turn of masses of awakened people towards newly-experienced arts, partly during the war, also at its end; much of the story of the re-fastening of the shackles of privilege upon millions who have been re-deprived. For the Arts Council stemmed from the wartime C.E.M.A., (Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts), which offered workers in factories, air-raid shelters, villages and small towns, theatre and music of a high quality for the first time in their history. Tom Russell, describing this in detail, speaking to the 1955 conference organised by the Communist Party on "Culture in Britain Today" said that "the people took it with both hands, and no one who took part in it could ever forget what culture means when all the people are for it".

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In 1946, C.E.M.A. became the Arts Council and was made directly responsible to the Treasury. Plans were drawn up for Arts Centres to be built in war-ravaged towns and cities (yes, that concept of which one or two or three are coming only now to difficult birth is that old). It was planned that symphony orchestras should pay constant visits to industrial places and that permanent theatre organisations should be built on the basis of work done during the war. Plans were made for more theatres and concert halls throughout the country. Then one by one, year by year, provincial plans were killed for financial reasons. The tendency to centralise, bureaucratise the Arts Council's work moved in, along with every Government move further away from thoughts of socialism and from the democracies of 1945. (Tom Russell has documented this period in detail).

Now, on housing of the arts, Sir Kenneth Clark, Chairman of the Arts Council, and W. E. Williams, Secretary, state: "At current prices £1 million a year for ten years would cover all the recommendations we make for the whole of Britain." They give as London's priority needs: A National Theatre, a new medium-sized concert hall, and an exhibition gallery. Proposals are that these should all be on the South Bank They welcome the London County Council's proposal for the gallery. The concept is of a Metropolitan Arts Centre. The National Film Theatre is already there.

Their emphasis is laid heavily upon London as the centre, for prestige reasons. They point out that half Britain is in Greater London, with visitors from the United Kingdom and overseas included.

Of £833,803 expended in their grants and guarantees to the arts for the year ending March 31st, 1959, I give figures as the briefest language in which to express their sense of balance.

Opera and Ballet:

Royal Opera House	£362,000
Sadler's Wells Trust	£155,000
The rest	£95,453
	£612,453

Symphony Orchestras: £85,550. (Highest grant, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Society, £20,250).

Other Musical Activities: £37,196. (Largest, payment to music societies and clubs affiliated to National Federation of Music Societies, £22,493).

Drama: £76,853.

Art: £4,789.

Arts Centres and Arts Clubs: £5,903.

Poetry: £1,640.

Festivals: £7,418.

Their efforts at solution of the "struggle for survival" on the niggardly grants then being reported on is exemplified in their comment in the section on Theatre: "Should we settle for a limited number of theatres of high quality rather than present a losing battle to hold a long line of repertory outposts?" The answer is contained in every selected word and the echo is "Few but Roses".

Their financial approach is that of "the doctrine of collective patronage". This is, in the main, the combination of Local Authorities' support given under the permissive Local Government Act of 1948, Clause 132, "Entertainments Clause", which states that a local authority may levy and spend up to a 6d. rate in promoting entertainment.

(Most notable example the Arts Council gives of its use is provision of £40,000 a year for the Scottish National Orchestra by eighty Scottish towns and villages.)

Included also is the possibility of "substantial funds" from the Gulbenkian Foundation, grants from industrialists, and ITV's decision to make grants to arts and sciences. The four ITV companies made £100,000 available. But, they plaintively comment, "the mass media, meanwhile, make no significant capital investment in the arts they put to use and profits. In the field of science and technology, things are very different. The big industries have contributed millions of pounds to basic research, to the endowment of laboratories and research centres in our universities, to provision of professorships and scholarships and foreign exchange of knowledge. The mass media have made no such equivalent contribution in their field: they have hired the arts but made no capital investment in them." For a moment, it would seem that the shutter closed in confusion on the photographic eye so accustomed to seeing our system and the people in terms of the status quo!

Gulbenkian Foundation's Report

The Gulbenkian Foundation's 1959 Report *Help for the Arts* brings a more democratic and realist approach to the need and general issues to face within Britain—viewed as it is and without hint of political challenge, since the review was made by Lord Bridges, the Countess of Albemarle, Mr. Noel Annan and Sir George Barnes. Their good will towards a population changing in its habits and habitats—they are very conscious of the problems of the new towns—is expressed thus: "We have proceeded on the broad assumption that many more people in all sections of the population could derive pleasure from the

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arts than do at present." They have aimed to cover, with discussion, people and institutions of distinctive cities over the country.

Their formulation of the need to foster the arts has a humanism that assumes one of their great powers, that of social communication and enrichment. They say: "We believe the latent power of enjoyment is far more widespread than are the opportunities of awakening it, and that when awakened it can open channels of communication between individuals and groups who share few intellectual or social sympathies and who are unsuspecting of the power they possess." Their completely unexplosive view of society and of the dynamic power that a higher degree of consciousness would bring to it is, of course, also clear in their view that "the trend of our social conditions means that a far greater proportion of the people of this country will, in years to come, have leisure and the means to enjoy the arts". And the old, intellectual illusion, familiar to many of us, that science and the arts fall into quite different creative categories of "fact" and "feeling" gives their sense of the importance of the arts a curative flavour, one which calls sharply to mind the challenging words of J. D. Bernal—"Science is not something abstract, removed from the people. . . . We must begin now by the union of all the cultural forces. One of the important ways of stifling both science and art is to separate them."

Within their framework, nevertheless, valuable stresses are laid. They state clearly that far greater support is needed for the arts than in the past. That far more needs to be done to render the arts accessible *particularly in the provinces*. That there should be more scope for experiment in order to invigorate the arts. That more should be done to foster appreciation of the arts among the young, pointing to the small incentive encouragement given to school-leavers to develop the interests stimulated there.

Comments on state patronage include their view that there is a greater obligation on the Government to provide support for the arts on a generous scale, and in particular adequate purchase grants to museums and galleries, because they do not enable the private patron's purchases through income tax deduction (as in the U.S.A.). More important is their analysis of why state aid is less readily given to help new needs, new forms of art, because there is a tendency for state grants to take the form of meeting deficits. Undeniably important is their view that far too little is done for the arts in the provinces as compared with London.

On operation of Clause 132 of 1948's Local Government Act—the permissive 6d. rate—they are emphatic.

Local authority expenditure over the country as a whole, it was calcuplated in spring 1959, does not exceed the equivalent of a ¾d. rate for museums and galleries and one-fifth of a penny for music and drama: even county boroughs spend less than 2d. and a ½d. rate respectively on these. "So long as local authorities spend less than a twentieth of the 6d. rate permitted, they can be regarded as only marginal instead of major patrons of the arts." They do not examine the democratic ways in which this vital possibility for support can radically be increased. But they do put forward an interesting suggestion, already operated in support of most of the symphony orchestras by a number of local authorities.

This is the proposal to create a kind of provincial network for the founding of *Arts Centres* in—say—the twelve largest provincial cities, from which a spirit of rivalry (they suggest) would be created as to which could provide the best artistic activities for itself and surrounding districts.

(Nottingham is an example; with a population of 300,000 they have surrounds of 1 million: and they have ambitious and inclusive Arts Centre plans to be completed by 1962.)

They say that one of the primary objects of policy of the Gulbenkian Foundation should be to help artistic enterprises in the provinces, and believe that the Arts Council, too, should give increasing support, in addition to increased support from local authorities.

Among a variety of useful points they make are the following:

Lack of children's theatres and opportunities for them.

The existing spread of Art Centres and Clubs.

The high effect of a large and well-publicised exhibition on public taste (they instance the Festival of Britain).

On the long-term effect of broadcasting and television, they believe both will increase the public demand for performances to a live audience. They add that the theatres and concert halls will have to be comfortable and the performances of high quality, to gain attendance.

Their special documentation of Stevenage as a new town and stress on the priority need for neighbourhood Youth Centres and a central one, is positive and valuable.

The Labour Party's Proposals

The Labour Party's *Leisure for Living*, a carefully presented publication—a prestige affair—carries a broader view in some respects of the leisure interests of the British people. To the fields of "people and the arts", "patterns of prestige",

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architecture, theatre, music, films, TV and radio they add sections on sport and on the open air. It is, in fact, these two sections, alike in their presence and in their drafting, which bring some of the live fresh atmosphere of the leisure-behaviour of the great Labour movement as we know it (or at any rate vividly remembered views of it) into view, and into consideration.

Absent is that product of the conscious Labour movement for generations, successfully struggled for and won, adult education, with the work of organisations like the Workers' Educational Association and the National Council of Labour Colleges. Absent, one supposes, because to these reviewers of pleasure and leisure for people just as they are (or rather as they see them from afar) their conscious striving for knowledge implied by these activities falls outside their field of view. Absent, by the same token, is science—passionate interest in many forms, even now, of countless workers in this age of space and coming automation, from the sci-fic reader up.

For this, as a whole, is the most static, polite and deliberately "managed" of documents.

For a pre-election publication it is singularly lacking in formulated proposals, conditioned probably by their view that "public support for the arts ought not to be an issue of Party politics." It carries many of the points made in one or other of the programmes: the need for more expenditure in the provinces, the same attitude to the need for diverse forms of public and private patronage that the Gulbenkian Foundation Committee outlines, the call for later opening of the British Museum, outline of the deplorable position of 800 museums and galleries outside London, a valuable stress on the importance of industrial design and the scope for greater contribution by sculptors to the adornment of public buildings, the one and only comment on the anomaly of underpayment of musicians at a weekly wage of only £13 10s, with their need to buy instruments costing perhaps hundreds of pounds, the valid suggestion that "it is arguable that fall-off in cinema attendances is due to the poor quality of films shown".

The tone is faintly condescending because the drafters are so very uninvolved in the lives of the masses of the people whose pleasure and leisure they are considering. They are that because they have no truly defined or vital purpose in considering the potential of the people. Their negative approach starts with the introduction. "Millions," they say, "know very well how to use their leisure." To these fortunate people it may seem strange that a political party should bother about recreation and leisure. They do pretty well as they are. But there are many others who have not their luck, etc. Millions to whom an unexpected few hours with "nothing to do and no place to go may mean a spell of boredom." And so, they say, they are trying to show what can be done to ensure that everybody will have a better chance than now of enjoying life to the full out of working hours. And what, you find yourself angrily asking, about *changing* people, the normal, the conscious, the sentient, to the fullest possible extent? Isn't that what the arts are for?

Drafters of the Gulbenkian Report envisaged some of that process. No such questions are asked here. "This does NOT mean that we want to be state nannies and run everybody's private lives for them", they rush to reassure the reader after the brief allusion to thoughts for the less fortunate. The same tightrope treading between their narrow concept of a static personal "freedom" and the desire to make a gesture towards democratising the arts carries all through. "People must, of course, be free to accept and enjoy, or to reject because they are not interested, the best in all the arts." They go on to say that there cannot be freedom of choice unless the arts at their best are available to all—an extension into adult life of "our basic principle of educational opportunity." (An ambiguous measure, indeed, from Labour.)

Even in the more forthright section "Nation of Sportsmen?" a pungent paragraph on the passive side of the British people's passion for sport is followed by a hasty "we mention these facts not to judge or condemn—in games as in other leisure activities, men and women must be free to enjoy themselves as they like".

And then this, from the Introduction: "Leisure, in short, is enjoyed most deeply and most creatively by those who have a *sense of direction* in their everyday life and work. Good as it would be, therefore, to increase the Government grant to the Arts Council (and this we certainly intend to do) it would be even better that this should be done as part of the more purposeful replanning of the economic and social structure of society." What direction? you cry out as you read. And you are not enlightened, because the line of direction does not lead anywhere out of the present picture, the present structure of society. Search for the word socialism throughout this document and you find it twice only—"As Socialists we are proud that the most important building commissioned in modern times by any part of the Labour movement—Congress House—is uncompromisingly of the present age": and in relation to the "Open Air". Search for the proud meanings of socialism embedded in millions of working class men and women in varying degrees, the desire to equip

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people more fully with all possible senses and understanding so that through their own change they are conscious of the change they intend to make in society (that most uncompromising change of all, and strictly of the present) and you find only emasculated pharaseology to betray the possibility that people, in learning to love life more, should wish to possess its full possibilities in terms of economic and political power.

Happiness versus Prosperity

Its pathetic "practical postscript" is like a tombstone. "We know that true happiness does not come from material prosperity. Happiness comes from a full, free, satisfying life—a decent home, a secure job that you like doing, leisure richly filled with the good things of civilisation." They are themselves quoting from *The Future Labour Offers You*. And this cold slab of unpractical stone they want to offer, instead of bread, to millions of men and women who can increasingly be enlivened to fuller Socialist purpose by democratising, actively participating in, the arts and sports for which, as with all they have gained and will gain, they will have to struggle themselves. With all the help they can get from their appointed authorities and elected representatives.

Of course there are, mutely available for such pressure, useful proposals and points in their programme, which should be mentioned. They, too, point to the lack of use of Clause 132 on the 6d. rate, Local Government Act of 1948. "Boldly as the beginnings of a realistic modern approach to patronage were made, they have not been followed up adequately in recent years" is their attitude.

They would themselves, if they had been returned to office in 1959, have raised Government expenditure on the arts to £4 million. But throughout there is no word of the dominating national expenditure on arms that cripples expenditure on the peaceful lives and interests of the citizens.

Most outright proposal is a Sports Council for Britain, to which Labour would grant £5 million with yearly following sums. The Council should co-operate with national sporting organisations in providing all that is necessary for uses of physical recreation including coaching: ensure fuller British participation in international sporting events: take action to raise the standard of games and athletics throughout the country. A survey should be made, and full use made of the enterprise of local authorities and voluntary organisations.

This is something, and something in which it would be essential to involve bodies of the trade union and Labour movement along with local authorities. These, however, have not been considered in their presentation. They are absent throughout.

Further proposal is that the National Parks Commission should become the chief agency for the use of public funds for preserving and enjoying the countryside, functioning like the Arts Council.

The section on music, contains an interesting and sympathetic account of the development of jazz, ballads and blues, folksong, through the B.B.C. and popular performance and places them rightly as significant contemporary developments.

But the stultifying lack of socialist purpose hangs like a pall over this well-dressed document. Lack of recognition or active dread of the great force of creative energy that could be released in the people by really powerful steps to bring them active participation in the arts and sports, becomes more outrageous as you study the soft phrases that cover the betrayals of all socialist purpose.

The Communist Party is beginning to work on an immediate cultural programme for the whole people, which will be a living part of our process of struggle for socialism in Britain, and a special contribution towards *The British Road to Socialism*.

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Working Wives

Molly Keith

WOMAN'S place is in the home. Mothers who go out to work are failing in their duty to their children. How often are these sentiments expressed—more often than not by people who employ others to bring up their own children!

How many working women are there? How many of them are married? Why do they go out to work? What sort of jobs do they do? A recent survey just published throws some light on these questions. (*Working Wives,* by Dr. Viola Klein, published by the Institute of Personnel Management).

In the past decade there has been an increasing number of married women seeking employment outside the home. There are 8 million working women, i.e. one-third of the labour force; about half of them are married. There are no official figures showing how many of these have children of school age. (The survey, although small, revealed that 32 per cent of married women out to work had one or two children under the age of five.) To have an outside job and run a home as well calls for patience, good organisation and almost limitless energy; it is certainly no picnic, and yet more and more women are doing this. What are the main reasons?

There is no doubt whatsoever that the primary reason is economic necessity. The Tories claim to have stabilised the cost of living in the last eighteen months, but even if this were true it is certainly not true of the years 1951-57 when living costs rose sharply. The Tories' 1957 Rent Act gave millions of pounds extra to the landlords from the increased rents which affected almost every family. To keep children at school until they are eighteen or nineteen is also a costly business. Uniforms, sports equipment and the like have to be supplied by parents, and in general grants do not cover all these expenses. Many women go out to work to help their sons and daughters get higher education.

A few years ago the cry was that women only worked for pin money: today it is claimed by some that they work only to buy washing machines, spin dryers, refrigerators and the like.

If a really comprehensive survey could be made, there is little doubt that the increasing number of working wives is due to rising costs, and that more and more workers are demanding a larger share of the wealth which they produce, in the form of wages, shorter hours and longer holidays. They demand more consumer goods and better standards. And why not? In this nuclear age a few labour-saving devices for the home cannot be considered luxuries. It is abundantly clear that there would be far fewer of these things in working class homes if the wives had not turned out to work to get them.

Another factor for the increase in the number of working wives is to some extent due to earlier marriage, which often means that the children are off her hands by the time the mother is in her middle thirties, capable of, and wanting to return to paid employment. Statistics show that the highest proportion of married women at work is in the age groups 35-44.

What sort of jobs do they take up? Again statistics show that irrespective of whether they do part- or full-time the majority, 60 per cent, of married women do unskilled work. Repetitive factory work, domestic and canteen work, office cleaning, etc., i.e. the most menial and lowest-paid jobs. Part-time work is the most attractive to women with children, but there is very little to be obtained in clerical or skilled industrial work; it is more readily available in the jobs mentioned previously. But in industry as a whole, and here I quote the report, ". . . we still lack sufficient knowledge of what kinds of work lend themselves best to part-time employment, how it could be organised to meet a growing demand for it and what, if any, public encouragement could be given. Women, on the other hand, are in need of information where to look for openings with any chance of success, and what training could fit them for a career they can continue on a part-time basis if necessary after marriage."

Trade Union Organisation

With a female working population of 8 million, the question of trade union organisation becomes very important, but more than 6 million remain unorganised, and it must be said that the trade union movement as a whole is doing precious little to remedy this position. A few unions have organised special recruiting events for women, and have met with some success, but for the last two years there has been an overall decrease in women membership affiliated to the T.U.C. If there is to

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be an improvement in the women's membership of trades unions the whole trade union movement, and especially those unions catering for women, must pay much more attention to the problems of women workers. A vigorous united campaign by the T.U.C. and the Labour Party on the question of shorter hours, equal wage awards and equal pay, would have much more effect in bringing women into the unions than regular pious resolutions at annual conferences. The Women's Advisory Committee of the T.U.C. should be given some responsibility for a national recruiting campaign. This body at its annual conference, by resolution year after year, has focused attention on recruitment, equal pay, and adequate training and apprenticeship schemes for girls. But they remain paper decisions.

But how do the children fare when the mother takes a job outside the home? The school meals service is a very important one for them. But instead of the prospect of free school meals for all, envisaged in the 1944 Education Act, prices of meals have risen three times. A Ministry of Education circular issued last March revealed that school meals are not available in 539 schools, and also stated that 8 per cent of all children who take school dinners get them free, not because the Government is beginning to implement the 1944 Act, but because of the financial circumstances of the families. A very telling revelation in the days of "never had it so good" and the Welfare State.

For the mother at work there is the additional worry of what the children do after coming from school until the time she gets home. Usually it is the older ones who take care of the younger children, but this is, to say the least, most unsatisfactory. Very few local authorities have play centres and out-of-school activities. These are particularly desirable during school holidays. Local authorities have permissive powers to run such things, but the block grant system which the Tories introduced in 1958 makes it more difficult for progressive authorities even to maintain such ventures, and it gives the less progressive every excuse for not introducing or for cutting down such services as exist.

Day nurseries, considered to be a necessity for working mothers during the last war, were subsidised, and the cost to the user was 1s. per day. Since 1945 they have been drastically reduced in numbers, and the charges of those remaining open increased to a rate which makes it practically impossible for the average woman to afford them. Charges of 18s. a day are common. In 1945 there were 1,500 nurseries: today the figure is round about 500. Factory nurseries have dwindled too. The alternative to day nurseries is child minding. Sufficient examples exist to show the inadequacies and dangers of such a system. There is no doubting the evidence that many more women with children would look for a job if, in their own words, "there was somewhere to leave the children".

Many will argue that women with children should not go out to work (we even hear it expressed in our own movement), but the increase in the number working is an accomplished fact, and there is every indication that the numbers will increase. The *Report on Working Wives* draws attention to the fact that if there is any extension of the female labour force, it can only come from among married women. ". . . who are now the only substantial labour reserve in the country" (page 12).

Family Relationships

There has been no comprehensive survey on the question of family relationships when the wife has employment outside the home; there is certainly no uniformity of opinion among the "experts", and there is little evidence to show it has a detrimental effect on the children.

One of the conclusions of Dr. Klein's report is that for the vast majority of families where the wife works, the relationship between husband and wife has been improved. More money coming into the home makes for less worry, and often makes for leisure and pleasure, but the next important factor is that working wives have an interest outside the home; they realise that they are individuals in their own right, demanding more from life than household chores. Dr. Klein's report shows that many women would still work even if their husband's income were larger, because they like to get away from the home for a while, others because they liked the job they were doing, still more for outside company. Without being aware of it, they have touched on a fundamental point, for the full development of human beings, both men and women, can only take place through socially productive work and collective activity.

Lenin puts it this way:

> "The main task is to draw the women into social productive labour, extricate them from domestic slavery, free them from their stultifying and humiliating resignation to the perpetual and exclusive atmosphere of the kitchen and nursery."

A recurring question often from women in the movement is—which is the more important, the right to work or the right to leisure? Women, working under the stress and strain of coping with the double burden of home and outside jobs, find it difficult to understand that in a socialist

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society the two go together. They cannot grasp the extent to which social services would not only provide facilities for their children, but would include cheap efficient restaurant, laundry and shopping services, all of which would really assist working wives and mothers.

Instead of formal equality, real equality of opportunity would exist. Under such circumstances, women could obtain good technical and scientific training which would enable them to take their place in socially productive work. It is necessary for us to understand what equality means under a capitalist system. Lenin again puts his finger on the spot. Writing in *Pravda* (November 1919) he said, "Bourgeois democracy is a democracy of pompous phrases, solemn words, exuberant promises and the high-sounding slogans of freedom and equality. But, in fact, it screens the non-freedom and inferiority of women, the non-freedom and inferiority of the toilers and exploited."

In the Socialist Countries

Today from the socialist countries thousands of examples exist which illustrate what equality of opportunity means to women.

A handbook entitled *Women in the U.S.S.R.* has just been prepared. It shows the increasingly active part which women, who total 55 per cent of the population, are taking in Soviet society. The great progress in mechanisation and automation, the measures taken to free women of domestic chores, have helped to attract women into production, not in the most menial of jobs but in positions demanding skill and responsibility. Equal pay is written into the Soviet constitution. Soviet women today predominate in a number of industrial jobs requiring high qualifications. They comprise 64 per cent of machine operators, 70 per cent of turret lathe operators, 69 per cent of those working on metal-drilling machines. In agriculture women are 21 per cent of the specialists and 40 per cent of agronomists and live-stock specialists.

The U.S.S.R. and Union Academies of Sciences have 13,000 women members, 39 per cent of the total personnel. In medicine 79 per cent of all doctors are women.

In other fields, too, women are playing their part, in Government, political and social life, in culture and in sport. The socialist system provides continuous expansion of social services which assist women as workers and mothers. Between 1950 and 1959 the number of kindergarten places increased by over 1 million, nursery places by 358,000. Thousands of millions of roubles are spent on family grants, young pioneer camps and out-of-school activities. The seven-year plan adopted at the Twenty-First Party Congress provides for a further expansion in all spheres which will assist women. It says "conditions should be created which would enable all women to take a greater advantage of their rights, their knowledge and their talents in productive, socially useful activities. By extending the network of boarding schools, kindergartens, nurseries, public catering establishments, public utilities and other amenities, we are creating these conditions for all women."

In China new forces have been released bringing great benefits to the whole country. Rural China today has nearly 4 million community kitchens, and over 3 million nurseries run by the People's Communes. The new community industries in the cities provide jobs for almost all housewives who wish to work. Seventy-six out of every 100 workers in these industries are women, in Peking it is 95 out of every 100. Of the 1,226 members of the National People's Congress, the highest state organ, 150 are women. In People's China, after only eleven years, 23 per cent of the research workers in the Academy of Science are women, many of them among the foremost scientists in the country. Socialism demonstrates its superiority over capitalism in many ways, not least of which is on this question of women's rights and status in society.

What lessons can we draw from this? Does it mean that we can do nothing until we are on the British Road to Socialism? Of course it doesn't. Even within the limits of capitalist society women's status and rights could be improved, but it requires the united strength of the Trade Union and Labour movement, acting on those issues which vitally affect and interest women.

For us too, there is an urgent need, not only to lead and support all the present-day struggles for higher wages, shorter hours, and all activities which would help to improve the status and rights of women. We need to extend our propaganda for socialism among them, help them to understand that socialism puts the needs of the working people before all else, provides not only work with equal pay, but sufficient leisure to really relax and enjoy life. How quickly the tomorrow of socialism dawns depends on the extent to which we do this today.

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"The Establishment"

G. Carritt

IT is fashionable in all kinds of circles, Right and Left, to criticise a vague entity called the Establishment. It has become a whipping boy for all that is obviously hypocritical, undemocratic and class-ridden in our society.

By the Establishment, the group of "angry young men" who first popularised the phrase in political journalism and topical drama, meant the ruling social forces and their ideas and institutions. Those who use the phrase emphasise different aspects of these forces and ideas, and each defines the target accordingly. None of them analyses the relations between the particular object of attack and the class structure of capitalist society.

Consequently the use of the phrase tends to serve as a fig leaf which enables critics of capitalist society in Britain to discuss the capitalist state without having to admit they are discussing it. For they think of the state as a piece of neutral machinery, impartial in the conflict between classes and capable of being used for the purpose of creating a democratic planned society as it has hitherto been used for organising capitalist society.

Since the nature of the state is one of the main questions of difference between Marxist and non-Marxist Socialists, the attack on the Establishment assumes importance because it provides common ground on which Marxists and non-Marxists can clarify differences. Herein lies the interest in the book called *The Establishment*, a symposium on the Public Schools, the Army, the Civil Service, the City, Parliament and the B.B.C., edited by Hugh Thomas and published by Anthony Blond.

This book reflects both the degree of awareness and the degree of confusion about the character of the crisis of capitalism in academic and professional circles. The writers, who include in their number one historian, two scientists, one novelist, one stockbroker and two journalists, deal with their specialist experiences in a number of those institutions whereby the ruling class maintains itself in power.

They also define the Establishment in varied terms, but the publisher offers the following general definition of the phrase which he says was first published by one of the contributors. He claims this is the first book "to examine critically the power of this vague body which has been most nearly defined as the alliance of those institutions and social attitudes which defend each other against attacks and enable the ruling class to maintain itself regardless of its present abilities; power in fact without responsibility".

But while the authors make trenchant criticisms and indeed call for the destruction of the Establishment, their proposals for doing this peter out into modest reforms to abate the nuisance of decay and make it more tolerable to the citizens. In the following definitions taken from the book, the writers indicate their confusion:

"The Establishment briefly is the English constitution."

"The Establishment is the present-day institutional museum of Britain's past greatness. . . . It is Victorian England with all its prejudices, ignorances, inhibitions, that the Establishment sets out to defend."

"The Establishment is a handful of people whose family trees are rooted in the history books."

"The élite have succeeded in the City because they are members of the Establishment."

However, if the definitions of the Establishment are vague, the analyses of its particular aspects are not lacking in penetration. This is how the Assistant Editor of *Punch*, Christopher Hollis, for ten years Conservative M.P. for Devizes, describes the British two-party system:

> "The task of any Prime Minister of this country today, Conservative or Socialist, is to pursue a policy often the opposite of that which is demanded by his supporters and to prevent his supporters from noticing it. . . . It is one example of the growing gap between the language which those who govern the nation use when they are talking among themselves in private and the language which they use in public."

Neither party, he says, is anxious to discuss the great issues of the day for fear that a discussion would reveal its own divisions. "The overwhelming object of the masters of both parties is to avoid an open split." For the Opposition knows "if only it remains united, and if only the game is kept going, it is bound to have its turn sooner or later on".

Compare this with the description of the same

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system by James Harvey and Katherine Hood in their Marxist analysis of *The British State*:

> "There is a widespread illusion among the British people that their electoral system is a model of democratic procedure. In fact it is not an exaggeration to describe it as one of the most unrepresentative electoral systems hitherto devised in any capitalist country with a fully developed Parliamentary democracy. It is perhaps not surprising that the Parliamentary leaders of the two parties have worked out a system designed to perpetuate their own influence rather than to give effect to the wishes of the British people."

Or compare the comment of the stockbroker contributor on Viscount Monckton's consideration of where power lies, with the thesis of Marxists that monopoly capital is master in Britain. Of Viscount Monckton, this contributor wrote:

> "He represents the incursion into the City establishment of those top-level lawyers who, free to choose between high judicial or political office on the one hand, or boardroom posts in the banks and oil companies on the other, have not hesitated to choose the latter. On a reasoned comparison of the real power which they might expect to exercise, there can be little doubt that their choice was a correct one."

The chapter on the Civil Service called "The Apotheosis of the Dilettante", by Thomas Balogh, economist, Senior Tutor of Balliol College, Oxford, provides interesting new material. He supports the Marxist thesis that the upper hierarchy of the Civil Service, far from being non-political, is an essential part of the ruling class machine to maintain itself in power.

He describes the system of selection designed to guarantee that only those are recruited and advanced who subscribe to the rules of the Establishment. He gives examples of how the Civil Service is "in touch" with the great capitalist firms and the growing interchange of personnel. But most telling is the illustration of the way the high Civil Servants deliberately sabotaged Labour Ministers in carrying out the policies of the 1945 Labour Government. Of the 1951 financial crisis, Mr. Balogh writes:

> "We know already that the 1951 disaster of Labour could have been prevented had not the statistical material on which the Labour Government relied been fatally misleading."

He also describes how the Foreign Office deliberately presented a false picture to Baldwin and Chamberlain of the magnitude of German rearmament in order not to provoke unnecessary opposition. Yet despite this exposure of the class nature of the Civil Service, Mr. Balogh makes the burden of his charge "lack of initiative, lack of planning ahead". He as good as says "those Civil Servants don't know their job, we dons could do it much better." So no doubt they could, but better for whom? For what political end? The only answer to this question that Mr. Balogh gives is "in order not to be overwhelmed by the Russians. It is a challenge to Labour to achieve this and it dare not fail."

Labour is challenged by capitalism, not by Russia. If by discussion and debate the accusers of the Establishment and Marxists can make common cause in Britain against the evils and abuses on which we are agreed, the Russian bogey will fade away and the fig leaf which hides the brutal capitalist state will fall. Then we shall all clearly see the enemy.

Discussion contribution

On the Welfare State

Katherine Hood

JOHN BRIGHT'S article on the Welfare State contains a number of inaccuracies which ought to be put right if we are not to lead people astray.

On the question of the existing National Insurance benefits he says: "The standard benefit of 50s. a week leaves the pensioner or unemployed worker no better off than he was before the present scheme was introduced." It is true that unemployment benefit is about equal in real terms (i.e. in terms of purchasing power) to what it was before the war. This is not true, however, of retirement pensions, nor of sickness benefit, both of which were previously much lower than unemployment benefit. The standard old age pension was only 10s. a week right up until the present scheme was introduced in 1946.

He also says: "Pension benefits had been allowed to lag behind in real value in the steady inflationary situation." This was true a few years

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ago but it is not true now: the 50s. pension now is worth if anything slightly more in real terms than the 26s. awarded to old age pensioners in 1946. He also says that by offering inducements to those who continue at work over pension age "the retirement age has been effectively pushed up a further five years". But since in spite of those inducements the great majority of pensioners retire before the five years is up it cannot be said that the retirement age has been "effectively pushed up" to this extent.

On the question of the National Health Service, he says: "control of the Health Service remained mainly in private hands." This does not seem to me to be true; the structure of the Health Service is of course undemocratic, which is not quite the same thing.

In general he says: "Since the peak point of 1948 when the present services were introduced, there has been no development of the social services, but a steady process of whittling down benefits and destroying them". This seems to me to be a very sweeping statement, and likely to lead to misunderstanding. We can say with truth that none of the social services are adequate, and some disgracefully inadequate. We can also say, as he does, that the improvements in the social services have not kept pace with the rise in the national income etc. We can also agree that there is constant pressure to undermine them, and moreover a serious trend towards pushing more of the financial burden on to the shoulders of the workers themselves. But this is not the same thing as saying that there has been absolute deterioration or indeed absolute stagnation in these services as John Bright's statement would suggest. I think here he is on extremely shaky ground; National Insurance benefits are higher than they were in 1948, and I think that few could argue that the medical services in general have deteriorated since 1948. There is one service that he does not mention that has been greatly undermined, and that is council housing; for this service however the "peak point" was not 1948, and indeed for most social services the "peak point" was not 1948. In other words the experience is very mixed, and we cannot easily generalise.

In dealing with old age pensions, health and unemployment insurance in the inter-war period he says: "The social services coming under the province of the state were confined to these schemes." I think there is a tendency in this article to imply that "social services" are confined to what are commonly classed as the "social security" services. The term social services includes a lot of things besides these—education and housing, for example, which are very much the "province of the state"—local authorities act as the agents for the central government in these fields with, of course, varying degrees of autonomy. I think there is also a tendency to use the word "state" in its narrow sense of anything which is run centrally. But even if we confine ourselves to the centrally administered social security services, the statement is still not true; it omits one absolutely key event in the thirties, the formation of the Unemployment Assistance Board, a centralised, non-elected body, to which the "long-term" unemployed were transferred. The setting up of the U.A.B. had far-reaching social and political consequences; it was the forerunner of the National Assistance Board of today.

National Assistance is not mentioned in John Bright's article; yet at present no less than 2,500,000 people are living on it—that is to say, living on a means test. If anything exposes the "myth" of the Welfare State, I should have thought this did.

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